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OF

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

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VOLUME I.


EMBRACING THE SOURCE OF THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
THE PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE; THE
DOCTRINE ON GOD; THE DOCTRINE ON CRE-
ATION AND PROVIDENCE

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AND GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, IN THE IMAGE OF
GOD CREATED HE HIM, MALE AND FEMALE CREATED HE THEM.

GEN. i. 27.

I GAVE WATERS IN THE WILDERNESS, AND RIVERS IN THE DESERT,
TO GIVE DRINK TO MY PEOPLE, MY CHOSEN: THE PEOPLE WHOM I
FORMED FOR MYSELF, THAT THEY MIGHT SET FORTH MY PRAISE.

ISAIAH xliii. 20, 21.

JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM: I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND
THE LIFE: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME.

JOHN xiv. 6.

JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM: HAVE I BEEN SO LONG TIME WITH YOU,
AND DOST THOU NOT KNOW ME, PHILIP? HE THAT HATH SEEN ME
HATH SEEN THE FATHER.

JOHN xiv. 9.

BEING KNIT TOGETHER IN LOVE, THAT THEY MAY KNOW THE
MYSTERY OF GOD, EVEN CHRIST, IN WHOM ARE ALL THE TREASURES
OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE HIDDEN.

COL. ii. 2.

FEAR NOT; I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST, AND THE LIVING
ONE; AND I WAS DEAD, AND BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOREVER MORE,
AND I HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH AND OF HADES.

REV. i. 18.

*Tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet;
quia fecisti nos ad te,
et inquietum est cor nostrum,
donec requiescat in te.*

—AUGUSTINE.

TO
MY STUDENTS
WHO
HAVE HONORED ME WITH THEIR CONFIDENCE
AT TIFFIN, MERCERSBURG AND LANCASTER,
THIS WORK,
THE FRUIT OF YEARS OF STUDY IN THE FAITH,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
IN TOKEN
OF CHERISHED MEMORIES AND UNCHANGING FRIENDSHIP,

By the Author.

PREFACE.

The doctrines of the Church are the approved interpretation of the articles of the Christian Creed. The spontaneous endeavor of thought to ascertain the relations of doctrines and reduce them to unity in a self-consistent system issues in the science of theology ; and that it may answer the demands of sound reason theological science requires that it be determined from within and animated at all points by a central truth.

The evangelical Christianity of the nineteenth century is distinguished by the extraordinary force with which the Holy Spirit has been fastening the eyes of the Church and the world upon Jesus Christ. Many works on the history of our Lord, whether coming from the pen of devout faith or of cold unbelief, bear witness to a profound sense, prevalent among scholars, of the significance of His Person. Among evangelical denominations there is a disposition which is steadily becoming stronger, to assign non-essential differences a subordinate place, whilst chief stress is put on the primary duty of common devotion to Him who only is Saviour and Lord, a fact disclosing a tendency of religious life and a change of religious opinion which receives its direction and strength from a clearer vision of His supreme spiritual dignity.

Theologians on the continent of Europe have taken the lead in producing systems of theology constructed from His divine-human Personality as the fundamental principle. From authors in America

and Great Britain we have monographs on particular theological questions, commentaries on books of the Old and the New Testament, works on the life of Christ and on Church History, which acknowledge the paramount claim of this principle on biblical studies and Christian thought; but thus far no system of theology, developed from the Christ-idea as its standpoint, of American or English authorship, has greeted the Church. Works of this class have been fashioned after the Augustinian or Arminian type. As a consequence there is in many circles a sense of the lack of harmony, perhaps it may be said a sense of dissonance, not only between a large proportion of influential pulpits but also between much of the soundest Christian thought of our times and regnant theological systems. And from many directions has come the expression of a desire for a construction of all Christian doctrines proceeding from what is now generally felt and acknowledged to be the central truth of Christianity.

The scientific labors of all Christian thinkers from Clement and Origen onward through the middle ages I appreciate and honor, especially the great ideas of Augustine, which, as reproduced and matured by John Calvin, mark a mighty epoch of progress in evangelical theology and practical religion. But the Reformation did not propose to break the bondage of Romanism in order to replace it by a Calvinistic yoke. It laid claim to freedom of thought no less than freedom of faith, a freedom which has been fruitful of progress in spiritual culture and divine science. Set amid new religious and civil conditions, an emancipated Church has during three centuries been unfolding the deeper meanings of the Christian Creed. The knowledge of Scripture has become more accurate, thorough and complete; and under the discipline of the Spirit there

has come to personal faith a revelation of the primordial worth of the Son of Man, such as the Church has not possessed since the Nicene age.

Whilst it does not undervalue the decided progress in several branches of theology achieved by the heroes of the Reformation, this work is in sympathy with the Christological trend of the Christian sentiment and scholarship of our age. It is an earnest effort to make answer to the call for a doctrinal system in which Jesus Christ stands as the central truth; not only as the instrument of redemption and salvation, but also as the beginning and the end of revelation.

Governed by this fundamental truth, a system may begin by presenting the import of this truth, and setting forth its regulative force for the construction of all Christian doctrines; then pass on to treat the manifold parts of the Christian religion in its light and under its guidance. Or instead, a system may silently hold the Christ-idea as the principle of doctrinal thought, without in advance discussing its import and regulative force; then in the proper place develop the mediatorship of Jesus Christ under all its aspects. The former method I prefer and have pursued. •

Holding the Written Word to be the ultimate critical standard of religious thought as well as of faith and practice, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* confesses fidelity to the universal Christian Creed, and for substance accepts as valid the exposition of the Creed given by the Heidelberg Catechism.

It remains to acknowledge valuable suggestions which in the preparation of the first volume I have received from my colleagues of the Theological Seminary, and from Professors in Franklin and Marshall College. Special mention of my indebtedness is due to

my friend and colleague, Frederick A. Gast, D.D., who has rendered me important assistance in the critical reading of proof.

The note on Hæckel, page 531, was written at my instance by President John S. Stahr.

Invoking the blessing of God, I commend the first volume of *The Institutes* to all who are interested in the solemn questions of the Faith, cherishing the hope that it may do positive service in promoting the growth of sound theology and true religion.

The second volume, following in due course of time, will consist of five 'Books,' treating of the Doctrines respecting Man, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Personal Salvation, and the Last Things.

E. V. G.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
LANCASTER, PA., Jan. 6th, 1891.

INTRODUCTION.

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. xvi. 16). This confession of Peter is the first Christian creed, and strikes the key-note of Christological and Christocentric theology. When Paul was asked by the jailor of Philippi, “What must I do to be saved?” he simply answered: “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31).

The creed of the two chief Apostles was very brief; it consisted of one single article: faith in Jesus Christ. But this one article is central and comprehends in germ all other articles which are necessary to the Christian faith. So the one promise of the serpent-bruise, the protevangel (Gen. iii. 15), contains the whole Messianic idea of the Old Testament. Peter saw and apprehended in the person of the Redeemer the fulfilment of the Messianic hope.

The revelation of God for the salvation of man culminates in the manifestation of His Son in the flesh. The eternal Word, the Revealer of the Father, assumed a human body, soul and spirit, and by His perfect teaching and example, His life, death and resurrection, completed the redemption of the race and brought it into living union with God. He realized the idea and aim of religion, which is the reunion of man with God, and implies the three states of the original union in Paradise, the separation by sin, and the reconciliation through Christ.

Christian theology starts from the historical Christ. Out of Christ, God is unknown or only imperfectly known. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (or, according to the oldest reading: God only-begotten, *μονογενὴς θεός*), who

is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (*ἐξηγήσατο*, expounded, made a full and final interpretation and revelation)" (John i. 18). "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any one know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). This passage, which shows the harmony of the Synoptic and Johannean teaching, is immediately followed by the invitation: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The divine-human person of Christ is the sum and substance of Christianity. This is the article of the standing or falling Church. All other doctrines which have been made fundamental and central, derive their significance from their connection with it. The eternal decree of election which is made supreme in the Calvinistic system, is an election *in Christ*; for He chose us *in Him* (*ἐξελεξατο ἐν αὐτῷ*) (Eph. i. 4); and without Christ the decree is but a barren metaphysical abstraction. Justification by faith, which Luther made the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesie*, pre-supposes Christ as the object and condition of justifying faith. The supremacy of the Bible, as a rule of faith and practice, is an essential principle of evangelical Protestantism; but the Bible occupies this high position because it is the revelation and witness of Christ as the God-man and Saviour of the world. We believe in the Bible because we believe in Christ, and not *vice versa*. The Bible is not the true light, but bears witness of the light (comp. John i. 7).

The Christocentric method does not require that a system of dogmatics should begin with the doctrine of the person of Christ. The centre is not the beginning, but it throws light on the beginning, and on the end. Christology furnishes the key for theology and anthropology, the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of man.

The Christocentric method, moreover, is not inconsistent with the trinitarian method, but coincides with it. The trinitarian method

is based upon the Apostles' Creed, and the Apostles' Creed is an expansion of Peter's confession, with Christ in the centre. The trinitarian method follows the historical order of God's revelation, and treats of God the Father and the creation, of God the Son and the redemption, of God the Holy Spirit and the sanctification, of the world. The Holy Trinity is the most comprehensive dogma, but it is revealed to us in Christ; and hence the divinity of Christ was the salient point in the Arian controversy, which resulted in the Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creed, the only creed which is in the strict sense of the term œcumenical or expressly sanctioned by an œcumenical Council and universally accepted and used by the Greek, Latin, and Evangelical Churches.

In the scholastic periods, that is, during the middle ages and in the seventeenth century, the orthodox system controlled biblical and historical investigation. In the age of Anselm and Thomas Aquinas, it was catholic orthodoxy as handed down from the Greek and Latin Fathers; in the age of Quenstedt and Turretin, it was biblical orthodoxy as understood by the Reformers. In both cases, the doctrines were settled beforehand by the Fathers or Reformers, and confirmed by proof-texts, arbitrarily selected from any part of the Bible with little or no regard to its historic character and the difference between the Old and New Testaments. Now it is just the reverse. Exegesis must rule dogmatics, and the Bible must be used as an organic whole.

During the present century a new and most important branch of theological science has grown up, which is technically called *Biblical Theology*. It sums up the results of exegesis and gives us a connected view of the teaching of the Scriptures in its unity and the variety of its types according to the periods of revelation and the peculiarities of the leading writers. Biblical theology must hereafter form the basis of churchly and speculative theology. We want to know first of all, what Christ and the Apostles teach, before we consult the Fathers and the symbols of the different Churches.

New and fresh truths are to be dug out of the quarries of the Bible, and old truths must be renewed and restated. The theology of the future lies in this direction. Then we shall have no mere "bodies," but living souls, of divinity. Pastor Robinson, the Moses of the Pilgrim Fathers, broke the shell of narrow bigotry when he said: "The Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights of their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you, be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you."

A theology constructed on the metaphysical doctrine of premundane decrees, or on the absolute sovereignty of God, is out of date. It did good service in the seventeenth century, but does not satisfy the wants of the nineteenth. Every age must produce its own theology.

What do we know about decrees passed millions of years ago in the hidden depths of eternity? Can we conceive of God as deliberately discussing with Himself a plan of constructing a world, and finally coming to a conclusion and making out a program? Is this not subjecting the infinite and eternal Being to the limitations of time and the conditions of a logical process of ratiocination?

But we do know the historical manifestation of God in Christ. We do know the God of the Gospels and of the Epistles. And the God whom Christ has revealed to the world is a God of saving love. He is sovereign, indeed; but Divine sovereignty out of Christ is a terror to a poor sinner. It belongs to the Old Testament rather than the New. There is no greater word in the whole Bible than the sentence: "God is love," and the other which is like unto it: "God so loved the world (that is, all mankind,) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Shall we substitute for this: "God is a *sovereign*?" "God loved the *elect*," and the elect only? Paul teaches that God "willeth that all men should be saved, and come to

the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. ii. 4). Shall we change "*all*" into "*some*"? And shall we in like manner pervert the plain meaning and destroy the force of the passage, where we are assured that God is not "wishing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance"? (II Peter iii. 9). John says as distinctly as words can make it: "Christ is the propitiation for our sins; and *not for ours only, but also for the whole world*" (I John ii. 2). Shall we deliberately strike out the "not," and the last clause, to conform it to the doctrine of a limited atonement? "*Amicus Augustinus, amicus Calvinus, sed magis amica veritas.*"

God's love is universal in its aim and intent, and abundant in its provision for the salvation of every human soul made in the image of God and redeemed by the blood of Christ. If any one is lost, he is lost by his own unbelief, not by an eternal decree of reprobation or an act of preterition, or any lack of intention or provision on the part of God.

The idea of the love of God to all men, and the consequent duty of the Church to offer the Gospel salvation sincerely to every creature, have taken hold of the Church of this age with irresistible force as never before. This idea has kindled all the philanthropic movements and all the missionary operations at home and abroad, and carries them on with increasing energy and success.

The theology of the future will be a theology of love, broad as God's love and impartial as God's justice. Such a theology will give new life to the Church and prepare the way for the reunion of Christendom.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

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BOOK FIRST.

SOURCE OF THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE.

CHAPTER I.

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY IN DISTINCTION FROM BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

§ 1.

The question concerning the source of the knowledge of God, meets the theologian at the threshold of theological science; and it demands some consideration before we enter the door to survey the interior wealth and magnificence of the temple of divine-human truth.

As Christian dogmatics differs from biblical theology, the terms being used in the received technical sense, so must we also distinguish the sources of these two closely allied sciences.

Biblical theology has obtained definite recognition as a distinct branch of scientific study during the present century.¹ It investigates the religious and ethical ideas contained in holy Scripture, also the various types of apprehension and teaching of revealed truth which appear in the several books. Biblical theology goes on the presumption that both the pre-Christian and the Christian economies of grace came into existence by a pro-

¹ Bernhard Weisz says: "Die biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments ist die wissenschaftliche Darstellung der im Neuen Testamente enthaltenen religiösen Vorstellungen und Lehren." *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, § 1.

cess of historical growth; and historical growth implies epochs and stages by which revelation advances from its beginnings step by step toward completeness. Corresponding to this *objective* process there are also successive epochs and stages in the spiritual life and *knowledge* of the chosen people before the Christian era, and of evangelists, apostles, and the first teachers generally of the Christian Church. New Testament biblical theology seeks to exhibit systematically the various types of conception concerning Christ and His kingdom which appear in the New Testament books, and to determine the relation of these types to the living unity which underlies and breathes in the diversity.

The sources of this branch of theological science are to be found exclusively in the sacred Scriptures. The writings of the inspired authors exhibit the manner in which they conceived and set forth Jesus Christ and His kingdom. All associated branches of study are not *sources*, but helps; they only serve the purpose of aiding the exegete and theologian in rightly discerning the import of the written word.

Christian dogmatics has a different vocation and aim, since it is directly related both to the past and the present status of Christianity, or to the creative epochs in the history of Messianic revelation, to the ages subsequent to apostolic times, and to the needs of the modern world.

The science of dogmatics pre-supposes the manifold growth of Christian life, and the development of doctrinal thought in the history of the Church during the past eighteen centuries. It pre-supposes past conflicts with Jewish and pagan errors, radical transformations in civilization, the fertilizing influence of Christianity on philosophy, the discoveries and progress of natural science, the migration and culture of nations, and all the

thorough-going changes in manners and morals, in civil government, social organization and habits of thought which from age to age have been brought about by the commingling of natural and Christian forces.

Changes in the intellectual and moral status of the Church beget new intellectual and moral wants; corresponding changes in the various estates of human society develop new capacities for knowledge and bring in new conditions of social life. Hence it becomes necessary that Christian truth as taught by the New Testament and adjusted to the demands of apostolic times, be translated into modes of apprehension adjusted to the changed social and scientific needs, and to the new capacities of each successive age. Thus to translate and adjust the immutable substance of divine-human truth taught in holy Scripture to the ever-changing needs and growing capacities of each generation is the noble mission of Christian dogmatics, of which biblical theology has ever been and still is the immovable basis. Biblical theology does not as such satisfy *all* legitimate religious wants of our times; yet the progress of Christian dogmatics can not be legitimate, nor can progress at any point of time answer existing demands unless the science recognize the perpetual validity and honor the decisive authority of the original expression of revelation given by the biblical authors.

Inasmuch as Christian dogmatics is a discipline specifically different from biblical theology—though it has to do with the same divine-human truth,—the source of knowledge is in one respect the same for both branches of theology, but in another respect different. To the apostolic age and to all subsequent ages the one revelation of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ is given by the agency of the Holy Ghost; and the Church in all

ages alike possesses by faith the immeasurable fulness of that revelation. So far forth the source of knowledge is the same for the progressive science of Christian dogmatics as for biblical theology.

But each age, if faithful to its trust and mission, will develop a more rational consciousness and appropriate to its spiritual and ethical life a larger proportion of that immeasurable fulness. This progress in the spiritual life and apprehension of every age becomes to subsequent ages the condition of still further progress of life and knowledge. So far forth the source of knowledge differs. In the nature of the case the sources of biblical theology are in themselves always the same.

In general terms it may be said that the source of divine knowledge wrought into Christian Doctrine is a *unity* in a twofold form. Objectively it is the self-manifestation of God in Messianic prophecy and Messianic history as presented by the entire volume of holy Scripture, and especially by the books of the New Testament. "As the archetypal work of the Spirit of inspiration," says Martensen, "the Scriptures include within themselves a world of germs for a continuous development. While every dogmatic system grows old, the Bible remains eternally young."¹ Subjectively it is the same revealed truth living in the Christian consciousness of the Church; the consciousness begotten and nourished by living faith in Jesus Christ and by the faithful study of the written word.

This general twofold principle the history of theology has developed in a twofold way; one process appearing in the Greek and Roman branches of the Church Catholic, the other in the religious life of the evangelical churches

¹ Martensen's Christian Dogmatics, § 27.

of the Reformation. I shall consider the history of the general principle in these two main divisions of the Church, following the order of time; and then pass on to unfold the truth of the idea which has in all ages been recognized, sometimes with less and at other times with more self-consistency and completeness.

As the differences on the source of theological knowledge between the two great branches of the Church as organized prior to the Reformation of the sixteenth century are not of fundamental significance, I shall limit my inquiry to the larger and more influential branch, the Roman Catholic Church.

CHAPTER II.

THEORY ON THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE ROMAN BRANCH OF THE CHURCH.

§ 2.

The view of the Roman Church respecting the source of theological knowledge has varied. According to the opinion prevalent in the earlier ages of Romanism, there are *two* valid sources, the Bible and tradition. According to the theory which has come into the foreground in modern times, these sources in effect are resolved into one, the infallible authority of the pope in matters of doctrine.

1. The Roman Church has always held and taught that the Bible is a source of the true knowledge of God. But the Roman conception of the authoritative Bible differs from the Reformation conception in two important particulars. Following the influential judgment of Augustine,

Rome included the Apocrypha among the canonical books of the Old Testament. The Reformed branch of Evangelical Protestantism has from the beginning excluded the Apocrypha from the canon. On this question the Lutheran Church of the 16th century occupied an intermediate position between the Reformed and Roman Churches; she granted the claim made on behalf of this religious literature so far as to assign to it a secondary place in the Old Testament volume, but denied to it authority coördinate with the recognized canonical books.

Rome diverges from the Reformation idea also as regards the authoritative text. Both branches of Evangelical Protestantism take the ground that the canonical books in the original tongues in which they were composed constitute the ultimate authoritative text of the written word; whilst Rome has by the bulls of popes accorded such authority and dignity to the Latin version, now commonly called the Vulgate,¹ made by Jerome about the beginning of the 5th century. Whilst in theory the ultimate authority for the text of the Old Testament is the Hebrew original and for the New Testament ultimate authority is the Greek original, yet in practice the authoritative Bible for the Roman Church is, not the original written word,

¹A bull of Pope Sixtus V. proclaimed that the text contained in his edition of March, 1589, was the true, genuine, and authentic text of the Vulgate. A new edition of the Vulgate was undertaken under the sanction of Clement VIII., and was issued 1592. The two authorized editions differ very much. By authority of Clement a second revision was made in 1593. As between the authorized editions of Sixtus V. and Clement VIII., that of Clement has been adopted as the basis of all editions of the Vulgate since issued under the sanction of the Roman See.

By the Council of Trent the Vulgate was put "practically on an equality with the inspired Hebrew and Greek Scriptures." Cf. Schaff, *Church History*, iv. 399.

but a Latin translation. Evangelical Protestantism, on the contrary, in practice as in theory, ascribes final authority, not to any translation, but exclusively to the Bible in the original tongues.

This difference between these two branches of the Church, Hagenbach expresses thus: "The Roman Catholic Church assumes that the Vulgate version, which she sanctions, is to be preferred to all other versions as the authentic one, and thus to a certain extent assigns to the Vulgate a position of equal importance with the original text; while Protestants regard the original only as authentic."¹

2. According to the Roman theory, the other source of Christian knowledge is *tradition*, or the religious opinion on matters of Christian doctrine (and discipline) which from the apostolic times the Holy Spirit has handed down in the Church, as by His hand, from one generation to another onward to our own day.² Tradition, it is held, begins with those private teachings of our Lord which He imparted to His disciples during His intercourse with them for three years, but especially during the forty days of seclusion intervening between His resurrection and ascension; communications which were not recorded in the gospels or epistles, yet possess like authority with the canonical books. The subject-matter of these coördinate traditions has been and still remains in the keeping of the hierarchy, the *ecclesia docens*, which culminates in the universal bishop, the pope of Rome.

The nature of the relation of Scripture to tradition became a serious question at an early day. The connection

¹ Doctrine History, § 240.

² "In libris scriptis *et sine scripto traditionibus*, quae ab ipsis Christi ore ab apostolis acceptae, aut ab ipsis apostolis, *Spiritu Sancto* dictante, quasi per manus traditae, ad nos usque pervenerunt." Cf. Conc. Trid. Sess. iv. de Canon. Scripturis.

between them was at no time during the middle ages definitely determined. In the Greek Church holy Scripture had for centuries, at least until the council of Nicea, commanded supreme confidence; and this confidence, chiefly through the influence of Jerome, Augustine and Leo the Great, was shared by the Roman See. But as the power of the bishop of Rome increased, as he gradually asserted authority superior to all other metropolitan bishops, and asserted such authority on the ground of precedent and the inherited rights of the Roman see, the principle of tradition steadily gained strength, and claimed either coördinate authority with the Bible or an authority superior to it. The history of the middle ages reveals more or less oscillation, but the general trend of sentiment was in favor of the final authority of tradition. Received dogmas, the existing ritual and customs of the Church, became in practice the criterion or rule for the interpretation of the Bible. The current of ecclesiastical opinion finally developed into the decree of papal infallibility, pronounced by the Vatican council, 1870.

3. The Vatican council was the triumph of tradition over the supreme authority of the Bible. The pope has now by virtue of his office become the infallible teacher of the Christian religion. As the vicar of Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, the pope, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, utters the voice of God; he is virtually the fountain of the knowledge of all Christian truth, religious and moral. In his relation to the written word, he is the final authoritative interpreter. Being the repository of true ecclesiastical tradition, and the highest exponent of the fullness of divine truth, he is not only the final authority as to Catholic doctrine, but in effect he becomes the living source of theological knowledge.

The decree of the Vatican council has changed the principle of the original Greek and Roman theory. Neither the written word nor ecclesiastical tradition is now, according to the dogma of infallibility, in the proper sense of the word the *source* of theological knowledge. Both occupy a subordinate place. For the Roman Catholic theologian the written word and the history of the Church are legitimate spheres of investigation and study, but he may not be governed in his teaching by the results of legitimate scholarship or of free and independent inquiry. All his linguistic and exegetical studies, as well as the logical results of antiquarian discoveries and historical research, must be held rigidly subject to the decision of papal authority. The pope is the arbiter of divine truth. For the science of Christian dogmatics he becomes not only a true source of sound knowledge, but also the mediator of the light of divine revelation.

The logical effect of the Vatican decree is a denial of the existence of an objective source other than the pope, or the Holy Spirit speaking through the words of the pope. Whatever dignity and permanence may be theoretically accorded to the written word, its direct unchangeable authority for Christian dogmatics is in practice superseded ; since theological science is not free to grow and shape itself according to the genuine results of biblical criticism and sound progressive exegetical study. Instead, theological science must confine itself within the limits prescribed and fixed, not by the Tridentine or Vatican council, but by the Roman see, limits defined by medieval tradition, by the opinions of post-apostolic Fathers and the Schoolmen, rather than by deeper spiritual insight into the boundless wealth of divine-human truth as taught by inspired evangelists and apostles.

CHAPTER III.

THE THEORY ON THE SOURCE OF THEOLOGICAL
KNOWLEDGE IN THE EVANGELICAL BRANCH
OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC.

§ 3.

On the source of knowledge the history of the Evangelical Protestant Churches discloses two leading theories. The original theory, which prevailed during the 16th century and extended its controlling influence into the 17th century, affirms two sources of theological knowledge, namely: the written word of God and the illumination of the Church by the Holy Ghost, the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*.¹

1. These two sources, though always betraying an impulse toward severance, are when rightly construed resolvable into one: the Holy Spirit of Christ glorified, by whose in-

¹ In his Commentary on Galatians Luther distinctly declares that Christ is *above* Scripture: "Nun aber ist je Christus ein Herr über die Schrift und alle Werke." . . . "Ich habe auf meiner Seiten den Meister und Herrn über die Schrift, mit dem will ichs halten," Walch viii. 2139. So also in his First Disputation: 40. "Christus ist der Herr über den Sabbath, das Gesetz und über alles," Walch xix. 1749. Calvin says: "If we wish to consult the true interest of our consciences, that they may not be unstable and wavering, . . . this persuasion must be sought . . . from the secret testimony of the Spirit." . . . "The testimony of the Spirit is superior to all reason." . . . "As God alone is a sufficient witness of Himself in His own Word, so also the Word will never gain credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit. It is necessary, therefore, that the same Spirit who spake by the mouths of the prophets should penetrate into our hearts, to convince us that they faithfully delivered the oracles which were divinely intrusted to them." Institutes, I, vii. 4.

spiration the sacred books were written, and by whose illuminating, regenerating, and sanctifying work believers are enabled to perceive and know Christian truth as taught by the written word. The Heidelberg Catechism says: "The Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts by the preaching of the Holy Gospel."¹

The relation of these sources to one another was not during the Reformation period satisfactorily adjusted; and the want of logical adjustment became manifest in the fermentation of religious thought which ensued during the 17th and 18th centuries, when Reformation principles were supplanted by deism in England, by rationalism in Germany.

The original Evangelical conception respecting the sources of theological knowledge corresponds to two fundamental principles of the Protestant Reformation. In opposition to the Roman doctrines on the authority of tradition and the necessity of self-imposed external works of righteousness, the Evangelical Church affirms that Jesus, the Christ of God, is the Saviour of men, the only complete and certain Saviour; that for His sake God grants forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all who from the heart believe in Him; and that the satisfying knowledge of the certain and full salvation of Christ is adequately and convincingly taught in Holy Scripture.²

¹ Heidelberg Catechism, 65.

² I quote Hagenbach's statement on Luther's gradual approach to the definite recognition of the Bible as the only critical standard of Christian belief: "Luther was led to his view about Scripture, as the only rule of faith, from his views about justification; he came to the *formal* by means of the *material* principle. Contending against the false doctrine of justification, as seen in relation to the sale of indulgences, he first of all appealed to the pope; then from the pope ill instructed, to the pope better instructed; then to a council; until at last he recognized the authority of the Scripture as alone decisive; and

This general Christian truth includes two anti-Roman ideas, which became the ruling constructive forces of the Reformation movement. They may be expressed by the brief formula: *Scripture alone*, and *faith alone*.¹ The Scripture principle is called *formal*, inasmuch as Scripture alone authoritatively teaches the only way of salvation by Jesus Christ; faith in God's word of promise is the *material* principle, because only by faith in the promise or word of God does the sinner obtain the forgiveness of sins. In

elevated this to the rank of a formal principle. Even in his protestation at the end of his Theses, he says that he is not so presumptuous as to prefer his opinion to the opinion of all, but also that he is not so thoughtless as to put the divine word below fables of human invention." (Werke, Walch's ed. xvii. 254 sq.). He is more definite at the Leipsic Disputation, (p. 1160), saying, that no Christian can be forced to bind himself to aught but the Holy Scriptures, which alone have divine right. In his *resolutiones* he rises distinctly above the authority of councils. [Gieseler, Church History, New York ed. vol. v. § 34.] What Luther thus attained unto was further developed by Melancthon, Loci Theol. ed. Augusti, p. 4 seq., Doctrine History, ii. § 240, p. 230.

¹ The Second Helvetic Confession says: 1. "Credimus et confitemur, Scripturas Canonicas sanctorum Prophetarum et Apostolorum utriusque Testamenti ipsum verum esse verbum Dei, et auctoritatem sufficientem ex semetipsis, non ex hominibus habere. Nam Deus ipse loquutus est Patribus, Prophetis, et Apostolis, et loquitur adhuc nobis per Scripturas Sanctas."

2. "Et in hac Scriptura sancta habet universalis Christi Ecclesia plenissime exposita, quaecunque pertinent cum ad salvificam fidem, tum ad vitam Deo placentem recte informandam, quo nomine distincte a Deo praeceptum est, ne ei aliquid vel addatur vel detrahatur. (Deut. iv. 2: Apoc. xxii. 18, 19)." Conf. Helv. I. 1, 2.

The same general principle is affirmed by the Formula of Concord as follows: "We believe, confess and teach that the only rule and norm according to which all dogmas and all doctors ought to be esteemed and judged, is no other whatever than the prophetic and the apostolic writings both of the Old and New Testament, as it is written (Ps. cxix. 105.): 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.' And St. Paul saith (Gal. i. 8.): 'Though an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, let him be accursed.'" Formula, Con. 1. See Schaff's Creeds of Christendom.

their application to theological science these two evangelical principles become the sources of knowledge. The written word not only teaches the way of salvation; it is also the sole authority on all questions relating to the nature of the Christian religion, to Christian doctrines, Christian conduct and Christian discipline. The written word, however, may be understood only by men of faith; and true faith is begotten and nourished by the Holy Ghost, who by and through the written word witnesses of the truth to the believer. The principle of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ is thus in its relation to the question respecting the source of theological knowledge modified by the witness of the Holy Spirit. Instead of holding that the personal activity of the believer is a coördinate source, this function of authoritative teaching is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, who quickens faith and is in the believer the witness of Christ as He is taught in the word.

2. These Reformation 'principles' are distinct; they may never be confounded without loss to evangelical theology; nevertheless the two are at bottom but one. Both are developed from one central truth of Christianity, and represent two inseparable modes of its life and organization. That central truth is Jesus Christ, the God-man, who is in Himself the revelation and the redemption, the living communion of God with man, and the Saviour of men from sin. This twofold primordial truth gave rise to the twin 'principles' of the Reformation, because Jesus Christ glorified is for all time related to the Christian community by the Holy Spirit in a twofold way: (1) by the Spirit in and through the written word; and (2) by the Spirit in the new life and experience of believers.

Of Christ, the written word inhabited and filled by the Holy Spirit speaks. This word stands in the immanent

presence and perpetual energy of the Spirit of the God-man glorified. Hence the word prevails perennially in the Christian community as the most perfect image of the God-man in human speech, the image whose light illumines every soul that by faith lives in the fellowship of the Spirit with the great original, the personal Word incarnate.

Of the same Christ the Holy Spirit bears witness, not only to Apostles, but to all living members of His mystical body. "The Spirit of truth shall bear witness of me; and ye also bear witness." The Spirit guides into all truth. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all the truth, for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall He speak; and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come."¹ "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."² "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."³ By this direct witness to Christ in the heart of the believer, the Holy Spirit complements His manifestation of Christ by the written word. Says Calvin: "The Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ efficaciously unites us to Himself."⁴

The objective written teaching and the subjective illumination are two forms of the one testimony of the Holy Spirit; each pre-supposes the reality and efficiency of the other. But the inspired written teaching is the ultimate authority for believers qualified by spiritual illumination to discern Christian truth and to exercise a discriminating judgment. The issue of these correlated forces is evangelical knowledge.

3. Though at bottom but one, these evangelical 'principles' were during the 16th century commonly

¹ John xv. 26; xvi. 13. ² Rom. viii. 16. ³ Gal. iv. 6. ⁴ Inst. iii. 1.

affirmed only in juxtaposition. Their unity was neither definitely asserted nor even clearly discerned. Generally, owing to the double character of the conflicts of the age, each principle was separately maintained; and each at times with so much emphasis and one-sidedness as to obscure their vital oneness. The 'material principle,' or the doctrine of free salvation by faith alone, had to be asserted in opposition to the Roman theory of salvation by external works of righteousness. The 'formal principle,' or the doctrine that Holy Scripture alone has final authority, had to be affirmed and defended against two contrary errors. Whilst Romanism in its controversy with the reformers subordinated the Bible to the authority of tradition, the Anabaptists and other fanatical mystics of the age, subordinated the authority of Scripture to an inward light, received directly by revelation from God. Unceasing conflicts in two opposite directions necessitated the affirmation now of salvation by faith alone and then of the exclusive authority of the written word, and each 'principle' without entire logical consistency with the modifying force of the other. As a consequence the dualism of two factors was not scientifically surmounted by the recognition of their inward harmony; in the general theological argument of the age against Anabaptists and Rome the formal and material 'principles' failed to attain to thorough inward reconciliation.

The conflicts of the reformers with Romanism and Anabaptist fanaticism respecting the true source of divine knowledge, served to develop in the interest of the Evangelical Church four important elements of theological truth: (1) That the Lord Jesus Christ has central and abiding significance both for the doctrines of the Church and for the religious life of believers; (2) That Christ glorified

perpetually lives in communion with His regenerate people through the ever-present testimony of His Holy Spirit; (3) That through the agency of the Spirit by living faith His people have direct access to Jesus Christ glorified and have personal fellowship with Him; and (4) That the written word possesses infinite superiority over all the traditions of the Roman Church, and is independent of the supposed authority of any particular church organization.

§ 4.

For want of inward reconciliation, the two fundamental 'principles' of the Reformation did not long maintain their original coördination in the history of the Evangelical Church. The true significance of the 'material principle' was supplanted by a false predominance of the 'formal principle.' Both in consequence underwent serious modifications; and the Reformation theory respecting the source of theological knowledge was superseded and set aside. In its place another was substituted. According to the new theory, which in the 17th century and in the early part of the 18th century gained firm footing in the Protestant Churches of Great Britain and on the continent of Europe, the source of knowledge was twofold, not the Holy Spirit and Scripture, but reason and revelation.

1. The force of the original idea concerning the witness of the Holy Spirit in its relation to our knowledge of revealed truth began to lose ground as early as during the latter decades of the 16th century; as this idea lost ground the 'formal principle' pressed to the front, and arrogated to itself all the authority with which previously both had been invested. In the course of the 17th century both the Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church, especially the

former, yielded gradually to a false predominance of the Bible. It was held not merely that the written word was the final authority for Christian belief and the norm of all sound doctrine, but moreover also that the written word was itself the objective revelation, the *principium veritatis*. The exaltation of the inspired book reached a point at which it verged on deification.¹

The principle that the written word alone possesses authority for the church, or that the Scriptures are the only source of divine knowledge could not permanently hold the throne. The Old and the New Testament had to be studied and expounded; and to this end critical inquiry and methods of interpretation became necessary. This work in the service of Christian truth was the prerogative of human reason. Silently an impulse was given toward a radical change in the attitude of theological thought. The result was that revelation and the human reason came to be accepted as the sources of divine knowledge.

Revelation and the written word were equivalents. The difference between them had lost its significance in Christian consciousness. The inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testament themselves constituted the primordial revelation. The *truth* contained in the words and the *forms* of the words, or the words themselves, were alike given and dictated by the Holy Spirit, the writers being

¹ The one-sided emphasis on the Bible gained most definite and authoritative expression in the Swiss Formula Consensus, drawn up by Heidegger, 1675, which among other things maintains that the Hebrew original of the Old Testament, "is not only in its consonants, but in its vowels—either the vowel points themselves, or at least the power of its points—not only in its matter but in its words inspired of God." See Formula in Outlines of Theology, by Hodge, p. 656. Lutheran theologians also, Gerhard, Quenstedt, Hollaz, taught that the Hebrew vowel points were original. Superintendent Nitsch, 1729, proposed the question whether holy Scripture was God Himself or a creature?

merely penmen. God Himself speaks in the words which the Holy Spirit has written. In reading the inspired writings, Christian people come into contact, not with the words of man, but with the very words of God.

2. By the term *reason* was understood man's intuitive and discursive powers, no clear line of distinction having been drawn between natural reason and spiritual reason. Soon reason ceased to be merely an humble inquirer, a docile interpreter, and an able defender of the Christian faith;¹ and claimed that itself was a source of knowledge concerning God. There are certain religious truths, it was held which natural reason can clearly discern, definitely affirm, and maintain by argument against infidels. Such truths are the existence of a supreme Being, His attributes of power, wisdom, justice and goodness, the obligation of worship, the immortality of the soul, the moral quality of human actions, and the necessity of future reward and punishment.² There are other truths concerning redemption which, unless aided by the supernatural light of revelation, reason cannot discover. Such are the mercy of God toward transgressors, redemption from sin by Jesus Christ, justification by faith, and the second advent. These and cognate truths were held to be revealed, truths which God in condescension to man's helpless ignorance taught him by the Spirit after a supernatural manner in His written word. "Asserting that revelation was, more properly speaking, the complement of reason, the supernatural-

¹ The philosopher Wolf (1679-1754) declared that he could prove the truths of Christianity by mathematical demonstration.

² In this respect theology was in sympathy with English deism of the 17th century. Cf. *De Veritate*, and *De Religione Gentilium*, by Edward Herbert, † 1648.

ists belonging to the earlier part of the 18th century assigned to reason the office of proving the possibility and necessity of revelation." Thus we get in effect two sources of divine knowledge; the one divine, the other human.

Reason and revelation did not during the 17th and 18th centuries stand as coördinate sources. One was commonly subordinated to the other, either reason to the Bible, or the Bible to human reason; the former, when theologians, with a deep sense of the darkness and weakness of the natural understanding, held high spiritual views of Christ and the Christian religion; the latter, when theologians had exalted opinions respecting the dignity and ability of man, together with superficial conceptions of the necessity of redemption and of the excellence of Christianity.

Nor was the line of demarcation definitely drawn between the two classes of religious truth; the natural or rational truths appropriated by the Christian religion, and those truths that are new, because without revelation unknown. The principle that the truths of natural religion when affirmed in their relation to the incarnate Saviour obtain a new setting and a different teleology, received little or no emphasis. Conflicts ensued. Reason encroached upon the territory of revelation. There was a disposition on the part of theology by degrees to enlarge the circle of truths the knowledge of which was referable to native intuitive perception and rational reflection.

This was the natural tendency of scientific thought governed by two ideas, not unified by common reference to a deeper ground. Reason and the Bible, man and God, cannot prevail as coördinate forces in theological science. One or the other will be chief.

§ 5.

If we contemplate the question respecting the source of theological knowledge from the Christ-idea as the point of observation, it must be denied that either the Bible or human reason, using these words in the post-Reformation sense, is, strictly speaking, the *source*. Neither is original. Yet the denial cannot be asserted of both in the same sense. Reason is only the organ of theological knowledge; but the Old and New Testament constitute a part of the objective economy of revelation. The Bible is both the embodiment and exponent of the self-manifestation of God in Jesus Christ.

1. In considering the opinion that human reason is a source of the knowledge of God, it is necessary to distinguish broadly between fallen man and regenerate man, between natural reason and spiritual reason. The natural consciousness and natural reason belong to the fallen and perverted Adamic constitution, which both St. John and St. Paul call "the flesh."¹ "Flesh" includes body and soul in their organic unity. The poison of apostasy and of wilful transgression has not indeed effaced the divine image, nor extinguished all sub-conscious sympathy of man with God, yet moral evil has thoroughly disorganized human nature. Sin is a radical principle. It has affected man's rational no less than his practical life, distorting all forms of conscious and unconscious activity. The disorganization and perversion of humanity as a whole includes the disorganization and perversion of the intellectual faculties. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Though native intuition may discern the fundamental truths of natural religion, and though reflection may de-

¹ John iii. 6; Rom. viii. 3; cf. Mark vii. 20-23.

fend and support these truths, yet since, as the apostle Paul teaches, "the mind of the flesh"¹ is enmity against God, native intuition is vitiated by the poison of moral evil; and natural reflection is as to its animus just as really averse² as is the "mind of the flesh" itself to the authority of God revealed and asserted in Jesus Christ. So far from being a source of knowledge concerning Christian truth or the spiritual world manifested by Christian revelation, philosophic wisdom not infrequently contradicts and falsifies even those primary beliefs regarding God, regarding man and the material universe, which the human spirit, though enveloped in the darkness of apostasy, intuitively affirms.

2. The spiritual reason is the reason of the regenerate or spiritual man. Though in one respect still a member of the fallen race, the spiritual man is a new man, a member of regenerate humanity begotten in the second Adam by the Holy Spirit. This new human nature of Jesus Christ glorified, and this new life of the believer quickened by Christ's Spirit, is itself 'spirit.' Says our Lord: "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."³ The regenerate man in the organic unity of his existence being of the Spirit, and therefore spiritual, his intelligence and will share the heavenly unction of this new birth. If the *man* be regenerate, his reason and his rational activities, no less than his moral nature, are regenerate also; for the human constitution is a unity. Between the rational activity of the regenerate and the rational activity of the unregenerate,

¹ Rom. viii. 7.

² What Paul says of the Gentile nations of his time is, as a rule, applicable now to men who are unwilling to confess Jesus to be Christ: they refuse to have God in their knowledge. Rom. i. 28.

³ John iii. 6; Rom. viii. 4-9.

there is the same contrast as between the "mind of the flesh" and 'the mind of the spirit.'¹

Regenerate men being animated by fellowship with Christ in the Spirit, it is regenerate or spiritual reason which may be active in positive sympathy with the incarnate Word, or with the absolute revelation of the Godhead in the personal history of Jesus. If consciousness and thought may be a source of the knowledge of God, this dignity can be accorded only to the spiritual man; for the spiritual man and God manifest in the flesh meet on the same heavenly plane, and answer each to each.² Yet it is a serious theological error to regard spiritual reason as being, properly speaking, a *source* of divine knowledge. It is tantamount to the assertion that man may know God, or the truth revealed by the Father in the Son, not from God, but from man.

In some respects 'natural reason' and the 'spiritual reason' do not differ. The laws of thought are the same for both. A valid induction for one is a valid induction for the other. Rational processes are ascribable to man as man. But the underlying principle, the moral tone and ruling aim, differ widely. Natural reason, like the 'natural man,' is animated by the force of his false ethical attitude toward God. There is indeed profound sympathy between human reason and God, yet in conscious thought and practical life the vitiating force of sin is dominant. As to the substance of his being, 'the natural man' is adjusted to God and God answers to the psychological structure of his manhood; but the principle of moral evil sends its roots into the depths of his being, weakening and debasing the rational faculties.

'Natural reason' becomes 'spiritual reason' when by

¹ Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 14-23.

² I Cor. ii. 15.

regeneration the man becomes spiritual; when the man becomes spiritual 'he willeth to do God's will' and 'he shall know of the teaching.'¹ His intelligence is intoned by a right will, intoned by an ethical life whose controlling mind it is not chiefly to form conceptions respecting divine things, but as a matter of first importance and of chief interest 'to do the truth,' that thereby he may come 'to the light.'² By doing the truth from love to the truth the subjects of obedience become living possessors of the truth; when the truth ennobles their rational faculties and spiritualizes their methods of thought, they become fitted to think and to judge respecting divine things after a manner qualitatively different from the manner of thought and judgment predicable of 'natural reason.'

3. The human reason is the source of the knowledge of itself. In self-knowledge object and subject are identical. The qualities of moral and rational life are immediately discerned in the clear light of self-consciousness. But respecting any object other than self, whether spiritual or natural, human reason is never the source of knowledge. Related to something other than itself, *ego* is only the subject and organ of knowledge. The object, or the thing to be known, is itself exclusively and in the proper sense this source. The thing to be known becomes the source of the knowledge of itself whenever the normal relation prevails between the knowing subject and the knowable object; the object being self-manifesting and self-verifying to the knowing subject. The object is the source, the only source of knowledge concerning itself; and this source it is to a subject whose capacities are adapted to the apprehension of the nature of the object. The subject, or the *ego*, active in the exercise of direct perception and of

¹ John vii. 17.

² John iii. 21.

rational reflection, is the organ of knowledge inasmuch as the *ego* is endowed with cognitive powers fitting it to see and conceptually to take in the object ; the knowledge is true, and the self-manifestation of the object complete according to the measure of the cognitive capacities of the subject. Between the two things, subject and object, there is a correlation, each being adapted to the office of the other. The contents of knowledge come from the constitution of the object known ; but these contents come only to the knowing subject, a subject receptive and active after a manner answerable to the demands of the cognitive relation.

This reciprocal relation between the subject knowing and the object known, requiring each to perform an office peculiar to itself, is the law of knowledge. It has force universally. The law prevails in the spiritual realm both of natural religion and of Christianity as truly as in the lower region of secular things. The spiritual reason, or the mind of the regenerate man, possesses the capacity of discerning and apprehending the Christ, God manifest in Him, and all objective Christian truth ; but objective truth imparts its own contents to the cognitive spiritual mind. The relation between the historical facts of Christianity and the spiritual mind being mediated by the agency of the Holy Spirit, the subject sees and the object is seen ; the object manifests itself to the spiritual subject, and the subject, receptive and active toward the spiritual object, reproduces for itself the object in the sphere of consciousness and thought. That which is known, the material or contents of knowledge, proceeds from the object, or from Christian truth ; whilst the 'spiritual mind,' being both receptive and active toward Christ and His kingdom, takes in the truth according to its own categories and laws.

4. The proposition that reason is a source of the knowledge of Christianity, accordingly, lays down a doctrine which is not valid when predicated either of the 'mind of the flesh' or of the 'mind of the spirit.' The regenerate man occupies the right relation in the Holy Spirit to Christ, and living in Christ by faith he occupies the right relation to God. Being spiritual or 'of the Holy Spirit,' not carnal or 'of the flesh,' he has, at least in principle, the requisite capacity for discerning revealed truth, and for pursuing a course of rational reflection upon the entire realm of revelation. Standing in this spiritual communion, he occupies the position to which the world of revealed truth centring in Jesus, the Christ of God, is correlated. He and Christ glorified, he and all Christian truth, answer the one to the other. Christian truth is adapted to the rational life of 'the new man,' and the rational life of 'the new man' is adapted to Christian truth. The subject of knowledge matches the object of knowledge; the object as a consequence manifests itself to the spiritual perception and in the consciousness of the subject. More than this cannot legitimately be predicated of Christian reason.

§ 6.

When the right relation obtains between the object and subject of knowledge, between Jesus Christ glorified and the Christian student, the knowledge developed from this relation may be said to be twofold: first spiritual and ethical, then intellectual and scientific. Ethical knowledge may pass into and become scientific knowledge.

1. Sound knowledge has its root in sympathy—in ethical sympathy between the incarnate Son and the soul. Christian truth is the divine-human Person who is to be

loved and honored, not a proposition to be intellectually apprehended. A Person, not a thought, seeks to gain access to man's heart. He stands at the door and knocks; if any man hear his voice and open the door, He will come in to him, and will sup with him.¹ He will impart Himself to him who is receptive. If received with confidence and affection, He gives men 'the right to become' the sons of God;² and from this filial fellowship thus begun through the Holy Spirit and nourished, there is developed rudimentary knowledge of God. Rudimentary knowledge is spiritual; *spiritual* it is inasmuch as it is the awaking of sympathy begotten by the Spirit into consciousness. Contact of the object with the subject, of Jesus Christ with the responsive soul, conditions the perception of Christ, conditions insight into the reality of His Person and the worth of His kingdom, an insight which is more profound than intellect may grasp or words can express.

Such knowledge our Lord and His apostles emphasize as of primary importance. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." The knowledge of the 'teaching' as from God is not gained by scientific reflection, nor by rightly estimating historical evidences; the pivot of such knowledge is an obedient will. The activity of man's will in accord with God's will conditions the possibility of a right apprehension of divine truth. St. Paul speaks of his endeavor after divine knowledge on the same principle: "I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law,

¹ Rev. iii: 20.

² John i: 12.

but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." ¹ Renouncing earthly possessions and earthly wisdom, the apostle's chief aim was to gain Christ and be found in Him, in order that being righteous in Him he might *know* Him, and know the power of His resurrection. His knowledge of Christ depended on the possession of Christ by faith; the knowledge of the risen Christ depended on participation in the power of His resurrection.

According to the New Testament no right knowledge of divine things is possible except on the basis of felt contact in the spirit with Him who is God manifest in the flesh. The same law of divine knowledge is taught in the Old Testament. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. ²

2. From the knowledge of God obtained by confiding obedience to His will may be unfolded by logical thought a different growth of knowledge, a knowledge which is scientific. Thought develops the ideas of spiritual intuition according to the categories of thought; and seeks to construct a systematic view of truth after an order which thought prescribes. Knowledge on this secondary plane may be called scientific, because the logical and dialectic faculties, as distinguished from personal experience and ethical life, are active in developing and constructing it. The process is discursive as well as intuitive, dialectic as well as ethical.

Ethical knowledge growing forth from the obedience of faith is fundamental. If it be genuine, if faith works through love to the truth, valid conceptions of God may be intellectually constructed, and systematic knowledge

¹ Phil. iii. 8-10.

² Ps. cxi. 10; Prov. i. 7; ix. 10.

may be developed. Then the whole man, personality in all its functions, attains to the possession of divine truth.

Ethical knowledge of God and scientific knowledge of God differ, but these two spheres of knowledge cannot be contradictory. The former conditions the latter ; the latter complements the former. The function performed by reason is a necessary function ; but if the dialectic process be divorced from the obedient will and loving heart ; or if the order be reversed, if dialectic thought asserts the prerogative of leadership, and confiding obedience is ruled by the authority of the understanding, then supposed knowledge is external and superficial. Theological science will be defective and false in the degree that false relations prevail between will and thought, between love and logic. Ethical action will be perverse, because subject to abnormal authority ; and the logical understanding will form erroneous opinions of God, in consequence of the false attitude of the understanding toward Jesus Christ, who is to be loved in order to be known. ¹

When, however, a person by ethical action responsive to His claims becomes the possessor of Jesus Christ, the whole man in all his knowing capacities stands in right relation to Christ, the only adequate revealer of God ; and reason, the organ of scientific knowledge, may reproduce objective truth in the sphere of consciousness, and may possess the truth more or less completely, under the forms and according to the order of scientific thought.

¹ John xiv. 21.

§ 7.

The Bible, though to be distinguished from concrete historical revelation, is nevertheless an integral part of the economy of revelation. The written word, in one view of it, is a valid source of knowledge, but under another view it is not. It is a derived and subordinate source, but not original and fontal. Such subordinate source the written word is when held in its internal and vital connection with the entire economy of Messianic revelation, but not when separated from that economy and given an isolated or independent position.

Further, when sustaining its original and normal relation to the historical revelation in Jesus Christ, the written word is a valid source of true knowledge to the Christian theologian, or to such scholars only as by faith in Christ are His living members. By personal faith in Him they and He become subjectively one life, reciprocally active members of the same spiritual communion. They abide in Him; He abides in them. Says our Lord in His sacerdotal prayer: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and Thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me."¹ His prayer embraces not only the chosen twelve and all other faithful disciples of that time, but no less also all other men who "through their word" in after ages should accept Him as the Christ.

¹ John xvii. 20-23

In all alike, the first believers and those who should succeed them in the history of the kingdom, it was His will to abide, that all in every period of future ages might in the same sense be one in the life and communion of His love. He would abide in His apostles; and by His abiding presence in them they should know Him, know His love, know His oneness with the Father. As His apostles were to know Him by His oneness with them, so were all others who should believe in Him to possess Him through the Spirit, and by virtue of this vital union they also should know Him. The life-union, or the reciprocal communion of love, between Him and them constitutes the perpetual principle of Christian knowledge. According to the idea of His high-priestly prayer, Christ is not for men the light of God separate from and outside of themselves, but He is this light to them by virtue of His *indwelling* presence; and His presence is indwelling, He illumines their rational and ethical life, inasmuch as they appropriate Him by the exercise of faith. Appropriated and made their own by the positive action of their faith, He becomes subjectively the light of truth. He rules the will from within. He shines in the intelligence from within. Thus He who is in Himself, and independently of the will of men, the true Light of the world, becomes also the principle of light in their personal consciousness.¹

The source of theological knowledge is therefore in the first instance and fundamentally objective; but the objective source comes to be by the Holy Spirit a living energy in the subjects of the kingdom.

The Object of faith appropriated by the believing theologian becomes a new principle active in his conscience and his consciousness.

¹ Matt. v. 14-16; John iv. 14.

CHAPTER IV.

OBJECTIVE SOURCE: THE HISTORICAL CHRIST
GLORIFIED.

§ 8.

The original source of the Christian knowledge of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him as the ever-living Light the written word is subordinate. The personal Word manifests Himself in and through the written word. The books written concerning Him by evangelists and apostles bear a relation to His divine-human life resembling the relation of His own spoken words to His person; and these books through succeeding ages derive their light and truth uninterruptedly from Himself, the personal Light and the personal Truth. Mystically connected with the Christ of God the Bible continues to be the objective medium through which by the Spirit the original Light is shining into the hearts of believers.

1. Jesus, the Christ of God, is Himself the source of the true and final knowledge of God. Being true God and true man in one personal life, He is the Mediator, or in the absolute sense the Way, the Truth, the Life. He is not only the person in whom man has access to fellowship with God, but the one also in whom God has gracious access to man. Being in Himself the Life and the Truth, He becomes also the life, and the light of life, for the world. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness." ¹ To those who receive

¹ John i. 4, 5.

Him¹ Christ manifests Himself by spiritual communion with them. True faith in Him works through true love to Him; and true love to Him is reciprocal fellowship with Him,—a communication of His fulness to believers and an active participation in His fulness by believers. “If a man love me he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto Him, and make our abode with him.”² On the ground of this general principle St. Paul teaches: “Seeing it is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”³

This heavenly light as it shone in the apostolic age has been shining in all past ages of the church, and is shining now. The condition and medium of the shining of the heavenly light is the gift and constant presence of the Holy Ghost of Christ glorified;⁴ who was communicated first to the apostles and other disciples at Jerusalem, but not to them alone. For them the gift was an original, not an exclusive, possession. The promises of our Lord recorded in the Gospel of St. John,⁵ have undiminished force for all periods of time in Messianic history, and for all the members of the body of Christ:⁶ as Martensen expresses it: It is the work of the Spirit “to glorify the Saviour and to give the kingdom of heaven reality in the world.”⁷ With the apostles this extraordinary gift of the Spirit began; but the Pentecostal beginning was the beginning of an unchangeable presence, an abiding communion. Through the ever-abiding Holy Spirit regenerate men are directly connected with the glorified Christ, the original Light.

¹ John i. 12. ² John xiv. 23. ³ II Cor. iv. 6. ⁴ Gal. iv. 6.

⁵ John xiv. 16; xv. 26; xvi. 13 et al.

⁶ Col. i. 18.

⁷ Martensen's Dogmatics, p. 111.

The Spirit is the vital bond of His personal fellowship with them and of their personal fellowship with Him. By virtue of this reciprocal fellowship He is and ever continues to be to the members of the Christian community the true source of knowledge concerning Himself, concerning God, and the entire mediatorial economy.

2. To the inquiry respecting the source of the true knowledge of God, Christian theology, if its judgment be governed by the New Testament, is shut up to but one reply: Jesus, the Christ of God, glorified in heaven, is the only objective source; and to this source the written word is subordinate. As the Old Testament is prefigurative and prophetic, and as its prophecies and prefigurations are fulfilled by the personal Word incarnate, the argument may properly confine attention to the books of the New Testament.

The gospels and epistles were indited from time to time as the exigencies of the apostolic churches suggested. The teaching of Peter respecting the writers of the pre-Christian Scriptures, that men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit,¹ is applicable with greater force to the writers of the Christian Scriptures, in regard to whom our Lord said of His Spirit, that He shall receive of mine and shall declare it unto you. "All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that He taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you."² Possessing the Spirit, they spake, and preached, and wrote of Christ in the flesh and of Christ glorified as by the Spirit they were moved. Like their spoken words in preaching the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, their written words are their individual utterances, the verbal expression of each writer for his own purpose and in his own style of the infi-

¹ II Pet. i. 21.

² John xvi. 15.

nite fulness of their Lord, the objective truth and light, which through the Spirit apprehended them, filled them, and vitalized them.

Evangelists and apostles preached freely, and wrote freely ; yet they wrote and preached under the controlling force and influence of the new life-communion with Jesus Christ. As according to the promise they were themselves filled by the Spirit, so also were the deeds wrought and the words spoken in the name of the Lord. The Gospel as *preached* by them was the personal Truth uttering itself through their spoken words. So were the biographies and letters *written* by them the same personal Truth uttering itself and expressed in the permanent form of written words. The spiritual wealth of Christianity first communicated in fugitive speech by the voice to the ear, assumed through the hand a fixed outward form, and by written language was stereotyped for the eye in ineffaceable characters. The books of the New Testament became, in the very speech spoken by our Lord's representatives, the original and unfading image of the eternal substantive Truth, the living and unchangeable Word of God incarnate. Hence like the discourses delivered by word of mouth before the people by the apostles, these books became an integral part of Christian revelation. They prevail in the Christian community as an infallible source of divine knowledge, but a source depending, as when written so ever thereafter and now, on Him in whose name and by whose Spirit they were indited.

3. Occupying this position of spiritual dignity and divine authority, the books of the New Testament are nevertheless only the written *medium* through which the original heavenly light shines. Strictly speaking, the written word is not the fountain of light. Christ Himself, as when

in the flesh on earth, so much more now on His throne of glorification, is the *living* fountain; and no less after than He was before the canonical books were written; for in this respect His divine-human constitution and His office are unchangeable. The original Light, the Sun of righteousness, like the natural sun in the heavens, is from age to age shining forth from its own inexhaustible fulness. It is this fountal light of the personal Word that is living also in the written word and shining forth from it.

I may call Scripture the mirror, the perfect mirror, which is not only reflecting but also radiating the light of the original Truth. The figure of a mirror, however, may not most aptly be drawn from polished brass or a modern looking-glass; better from the eye of a child reflecting the face of its mother; or still better drawn from the living soul which radiates the genius and character of national and family life. A great man like Washington or Gladstone is to be studied in his relation to his race, to his nation and to the intellectual, ethical and religious status of his age, of which, conformably to his own individuality, he is the organ. In like manner are the authors of the New Testament to be studied in their immediate connection with Jesus Christ and His kingdom. Living by the Holy Spirit in this spiritual realm, they spake and wrote by virtue of their vital union and communion with it. They themselves became the representatives of Christ; and from their words, whether spoken or written, the effulgence of divine-human truth beams upon the eye of faith. As were the inspired writers held, so are their written words to be held in subordinate relation to the personal Word.

The relation which the New Testament books bear to the incarnate Word, is analogous to the relation which the words of Jesus spoken in the days of His flesh bore to the

constitution of His person. His words and His deeds were alike the manifestation of Himself. From Himself both derived their quickening and saving power. The work of redemption acquires its meaning and virtue from the personality and genius of the Mediator. His divine-human dignity imparts to the words spoken by Him their extraordinary authority and marvelous energy. His work and His spoken words when compared with His person, alike possess, not original, but derived significance. Hence those only who stood in some measure of genuine sympathy with His person and Messianic mission could partially understand the meaning of His discourses. To others they were unintelligible. "How can ye believe which receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?"¹ No unbelieving Pharisee could discern and take in the spiritual truth expressed by His teaching, or even feel its heavenly influence; no more than Jewish priests and Roman soldiers could perceive the victory over death achieved by Jesus on the cross. Those only felt the divine force, the heavenly unction, of His words who were apprehended by His life, and saw in Jesus of Nazareth the presence of the Christ of God. Accordingly when Simon Peter made that memorable confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," our Lord replied, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Calvin says: "The testimony of the Spirit is superior to all reason. For, as God alone is a sufficient witness of Himself in his

¹ John v. 44. "This ungodly desire of honor (comp. xii. 43; Matt. xxiii. 5 sq.) and its necessarily accompanying indifference towards the true heart which comes from God, must so utterly blight and estrange the heart from the divine elements of life, that it is not even *capable* of faith." Meyer *in loco*.

own word, so also the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit."¹ Through our Lord's spoken words and miraculous works, Peter by the direct manifestation of divine-human truth in the person of Jesus to his receptive heart, came to the perception of the fact that his Master, Jesus of Nazareth, was the Christ. If light had not shone forth from its living fountain, or if the eye of Peter's soul had not been receptive to the light, the words of Jesus would not have conveyed to his heart the truth with which the words were filled.

Now, as the virtue of His redemptive work depends upon the person and life of the Redeemer ; as His spoken words derive their enlightening and transforming power from their vital connection with the fulness of truth and light in Himself, and therefore possess not primary but secondary force, not original but derived authority ; so did the words spoken by His apostles, so do the words written by them, as handed down to us in the canonical books, perpetually derive their vitality and heavenly unction from their connection in the Spirit with the personal Light and the personal Truth. Inspired books are not self-sufficient. The written words of our Lord's inspired servants are no more independent of Himself than were the words that fell from His own lips. His spoken words had new meaning because He was the Saviour of man. For the same reason the New Testament has in it quickening and saving virtue. Not from themselves do inspired books give forth light. They are not the Truth in the sense that the term is applied by our Lord to Himself ; nor do they of themselves effectually communicate the Truth. The words of Jesus regarding Himself on earth in His relation to the

¹ Institutes I, vii. 4.

Father : 'I can of myself do nothing : as I hear, I judge'—are applicable to the Scriptures : 'of themselves they can effect nothing.' They are the complete representation and the pure radiation of the true light shining forth perennially from the living person of the glorified Christ, and shining in His communion with His people in every age of His Church. As such the Holy Scriptures are the necessary condition of the intelligent apprehension of Christianity.

§ 9.

The canonical books of the Old and New Testament are, however, not properly a secondary source of theological knowledge when they are separated from their personal source. Then they occupy a false position of independence. Though objectively their relation to Christ glorified is unchanged, yet they can fulfil their ideal function in theological science only when their true relation to Him is recognized and acknowledged; for like Christ Himself, His written word pre-supposes and demands corresponding faith.

1. Losing sight of the living synthesis of the written word with the personal Word, the science of theology may, as has often been done, sunder the Bible from the spiritual communion in which it perpetually stands, and regard it as an independent divine book, a book which in the providence of God has been preserved and externally handed down from age to age by the Church. Its preservation and continuous force are due, not so much to its mystical connection with its exalted Author, as to the sovereign will and power of God. When originally written, its spiritual import and virtue were derived from the Holy Ghost, through inspired writers ; but now the book is re-

moved from the writers by many centuries. No real bond of connection with the glorified Christ by His Spirit is recognized to be in it uninterruptedly active. To this divine book, thus isolated, the theologian, it has been held, may come as to an infallible teacher able to communicate the true knowledge of God and of redemption; and, ignoring its inward dependence upon the immanent Christ who to-day through His Spirit speaks in the printed letter as truly as He spake in the written letter when the words were indited, he may legitimately seek to derive the knowledge of the Truth from these ancient documents as from an original fountain of light. Holding this defective conception of the Bible, the chief end to be gained by scientific study is to learn from each book the mind of the inspired writer through the medium of the letter; the mind of the writer being regarded as identical with, or the channel of, the mind of the Holy Spirit.

Such abstract conception is certainly not wholly false; for the Bible is in a relative sense independent of evangelists and apostles. Moreover, these Scriptures are in themselves so extraordinary that when studied by a serious mind, they exert a singular spiritual influence on the student, even though the student holds very defective opinions on their origin and the cause of their power. But these facts do not invalidate the position that the Bible may ideally fulfil its office in the sphere of theology only when its living and unbroken synthesis with the personal Word, from whom its vitality is ever flowing, is discerned and duly appreciated.

Accepting the proposition which I have been presenting, that Jesus, the Christ of God, is the original, the true and only source of the Christian knowledge of God, and that the Bible stands in a subordinate relation to Him who

by His indwelling Spirit is ever present and active in the communion of His Church, this abstract conception of the Bible is to be pronounced inadequate. It falls short of being the whole of a sound Christological judgment. Divorced from its mystical ground, the written word holds for the theologian a false position. For want of legitimate relation to rational thought, the light of love with which the word is filled does not assert itself with due force to his mind ; and he does not attain to those living views of God and of the Christian religion which the word is qualified and designed to quicken. His knowledge will be intellectual rather than ethical, and formal rather than spiritual. He may search for God's will more than for God Himself, and for Christ's precepts and doctrines more than for the living Christ. To him the truth is likely to be historical facts and doctrinal propositions infallibly taught, rather than divine-human personality.

2. This abstract theory becomes still more injurious to theological science, when it ignores the important principle that personal spiritual fitness corresponding to the intrinsic character and historical relations of the Bible is requisite in the competent exegete or theologian; assuming that any scholar, whatever be his individual belief and religious opinions, may study the sacred text thoroughly and gain access to its interior meaning. Then the sacred Book is falsified in two directions, first, in its relation to Jesus Christ, and also in its relation to the student, being dealt with as if it were not vitally one with Him who is the primordial Truth, and as if it did not move in a new kingdom of realities totally different from the sphere of ordinary human scholarship. The opinions on God and the Christian religion derived from the Bible under these circum-

stances, must in the nature of the case be narrow and superficial, if not wholly erroneous.

True, the position of the Bible relatively to Christ and His kingdom, is not in itself changed by false or inadequate conceptions of the Bible. It continues to be what it ever has been. Objectively its vital synthesis with the personal Word prevails. The false attitude of the theologian affects the theologian; obstructing the legitimate influence of the Bible on his heart and mind; but it does not touch the Bible itself, any more than a false theory of language can annul the relation which language bears to rational life. The inadequate or erroneous opinions of a theologian, especially a lack of genuine sympathy with the Spirit of Christ vitalizing Bible speech, disqualify him for discerning and receiving its spiritual meaning. When the proper personal conditions are wanting, the written word, whatever be its own heavenly and perennial powers, cannot be to his mind the subordinate source of true theological knowledge.

§ 10.

To become a source of knowledge secondary to the original source in the true sense, the written word must be held by faith and reason in that subordinate relation to the glorified Christ which the word occupies objectively and historically.

1. This principle is implied by the argument pursued in preceding articles.¹ There it was my aim to show in what sense the canonical books are, in and for themselves, secondary to the personal Word. Here I emphasize the correlative thought that theology is required not only to

believe Christ to be superior to and more original than books composed by inspired men, but also to recognize and in its scientific inquiries to acknowledge the permanent relation of the written word to the personal Word, in order that for theological pursuits the written word may fulfil its office. Like the sacraments, the Bible does not fulfil its office *ex opere operato*. That it may be the living mirror of the original Light to the eye of faith and of theological thought; that it may become the medium by which Christ's divine-human Life may breathe into consciousness and logical reflection, spiritual aptitudes and a corresponding scientific preparation are necessary.

Scientific preparation is something more than positive faith. Faith in Christ is for the theologian the primary and fundamental qualification; yet by itself personal faith is inadequate. This personal qualification is adequate to the religious needs of the laity, who read the Bible, not in the interest of theological science, but for purposes of instruction and edification. As a faithful Christian the theologian reads and studies holy Scripture for the same purpose. But it is necessary that he study Scripture, not only from personal and practical motives, but also for scientific ends. His vocation is to cultivate the critical knowledge of Christian truth and to teach it systematically. When active for the purpose of satisfying critical and scientific demands he labors, not directly or exclusively in the interest of practical religion, but in the interest of logical thought; aiming at developing a knowledge of revealed truth which will answer to the categories and laws of rational life.

As his vocation pertains to the sphere of intellect and logical thought, the theologian has to occupy an intellectual status answering to the requirements of faith in Jesus

Christ as He is objectively and historically related to the Bible. The faith that Christ is by His Holy Spirit the transcendent yet immanent principle of biblical truth, must govern valid critical studies and inform sound Christian speculation. Thereby he is qualified to pursue biblical investigations for theological ends in harmony with the law of the Christian economy. The intellectual qualification is the conscious, self-consistent and persistent recognition of the personal Word and the written word as related sources of knowledge: (1) the recognition of Jesus Christ glorified as the *fontal* source of divine knowledge, who by His Holy Spirit is ever living in the communion of the church; and (2) the recognition of the written word as the *medium* through which the fulness of the personal Word in the permanent forms of human speech addresses faith and reason. Faith is the law of spiritual logic.

When the theologian apprehends the reciprocal connection between the living Truth and its expression by inspired literature, he is so far forth scientifically fitted for the successful prosecution of theological science by means of biblical studies. This qualification is a fundamental necessity. In the sphere of scientific knowledge of God it is as important as living faith in Christ is for personal religious life.

2. Since the Bible is not an isolated volume, not sundered from the Sun of righteousness which is shining in its various books, it is the living Jesus Christ who through them speaks to the members of His Church in the present age as in all former ages. With Calvin we may say, that, illumined by the Spirit, believers have "an intuitive perception of God Himself in" Scripture.¹ When this internal but subordinate relation of the written

¹ Institutes I, vii. 5.

word to the personal Word is seen, consciously affirmed and firmly maintained, the Bible occupies its ideal position for theology, and it exercises its normal authority. It is inferior to Jesus Christ, its force depending on His presence and life. It is superior to individual reason, superior to general Christian consciousness, conditioning and guiding theology in the scientific study of substantive Truth.¹ When the Old Testament and the New Testament are by theology, consistently with their objective and historical interdependence, related to their supreme Author, they become the condition and medium of a correct personal apprehension of the Christian economy. Christ glorified, the substance of revelation, in them confronts logical thought, and through them both faith and reason come into vital contact with the object of scientific inquiry.

§ 11.

The general conclusion to which the investigation of this introductory question has led, may be expressed thus: there is only one objective source of theological knowledge, not two or more sources; and that one source is the central and all-embracing fact or principle of Christianity, Jesus, the Christ of God, glorified in heaven, who is related to personal faith, to reason and theological science, in a twofold way, namely:

1. By the permanent gift of the Holy Spirit, who dwells both in Christ and in individual members of His Church, and is the vital bond of the mystical communion between Him and them. Thereby Christ communicates of His fullness perennially and uninterruptedly to them, as being

¹ Calvin says, "It is acting a preposterous part to endeavor to produce sound faith in the Scripture by disputations."

members of the Church and members of Himself. Thereby also they are able to receive from Him and appropriate to themselves new life and new light from day to day.

2. Christ is revealed to faith and reason through the medium of inspired books written by representative men of the pre-Christian and Christian economies, in which books, (the mirror of the personal Truth in human speech,) Christ speaks with heavenly force concerning Himself and His kingdom to those who live with Him in the fellowship of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is active both mediately and immediately, that is, (1) in the written word and through the word in the will and consciousness of His people, but (2) no less truly also by direct connection with believers themselves. By virtue of this immediate fellowship in the Spirit believers now sustain a relation to the glorified Christ resembling the relation sustained to Him by the writers of the New Testament. For them the Bible continues to be both the necessary medium of sound Christian knowledge, and the critical standard of truth ; yet joined to Christ by the Holy Spirit and living in Him as His members, they may also progress in theological knowledge by virtue of their spiritual fellowship with the personal Truth.

CHAPTER V.

THE SOURCE IN CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

§ 12.

Christ glorified is the one primordial and unchangeable source of divine knowledge. This source He is to His people not by the exertion of external influences, nor merely by verbal teaching, but by mystical union with them; a union begotten by the Holy Spirit and made effectual through personal faith. The transcendent Christ becomes an immanent vital principle, from which is developed a Christian ethical life and a Christian consciousness.

1. Being the true and only Light of the world, the God-man in His state of humiliation and in His transcendent state of exaltation constitutes the one fontal source from whom divine illumination proceeds. But if relegated to the transcendent realm, or so long as scholarship is divorced from Him, He does not illumine the human reason with the knowledge of God. No supposable influences emanating from Himself of which scholars may be the passive subjects are effectual. Nor does His revelation of God as given in the words of the New Testament, however indispensable, supply all the needs of theological science. Reason may speculate concerning Christ and develop opinions of Him and His kingdom which have a measure of truth; but while there is a spiritual chasm between speculation and Himself, there is no correlation of the heavenly Light to the eye of the human soul; and though

Himself the unchangeable Light He does not in consequence illumine and shape rational reflection.

The objective source of Light becomes really the source of knowledge for us by mystical union with our ethical and rational life. Two forces operate in making Christ the source for us, namely, His Spirit and our faith. Both are active ; both are necessary. The agency of His Spirit directly and through the written word is the divine factor on which depends the possibility of knowing Christ ¹ and of knowing God in Christ. But the effectual operation of the Spirit anticipates man's active response. The soul opens the door of access to its inner chambers. Man is the master of his will. Volition is his own free self-determination. Christ in His word by His Spirit seeks access to human personality ; but He does not gain access unless personality yields to Him. "Behold I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to Him and will sup with him, and he with me." ² The hearing of His voice, or the acceptance of Himself, is the human factor, the responsive act of the will by which Christ is admitted and appropriated. "The faith that profits me," says Theodore Cuyler, "is not an intellectual opinion or assent, it is the *act* of opening my whole nature to the Son of God so that He pours into me of His wisdom, His strength, His righteousness, His grace." When He is received by faith, the chasm between scholarship and the transcendent Christ disappears ; the false antithesis between God and man is resolved into sympathy and fellowship. Christ in heaven and the believer on earth be-

¹ "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith: Jesus is anathema; and no man can say: Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." I Cor. xii. 3.

² Rev. iii. 20.

come *one*. The two do not become identical ; the difference as to being is as real as when Christ and men are antagonistic ; but the two possess one life. Christ lives in His believing people, and they live in Him. This union is of the Holy Spirit by the activity of personal faith.

2. Accepted and appropriated by faith, Christ lives in the Christian theologian ; thus He becomes a new principle of action in the will, a new principle of knowledge in the intellect. The connection is not a sentiment, not a thought, but a really vital bond. The Christ transcendent becomes truly the Christ immanent. Living in man's personality, He from within shapes the spontaneous and free activities of the will ; He from within sheds His light into the intelligence, and governs the process of thought. The Old Testament and the New Testament teach this truth. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." ¹ An immanent vital principle, Christ begets a consciousness of God answering to God's self-manifestation in Christ ; a consciousness which differs in kind from those intuitive perceptions of Deity which are developed from the natural religious life, and differs from the conceptions which are the products of metaphysical speculation. We must intelligently distinguish between the natural consciousness of God and the God-consciousness which proceeds from union and communion with the glorified Christ. The former is developed from God's relation to man in his apostate and perverted condition ; whilst the latter originates from the relation of God to man in the economy of grace, and is governed, not by a nature averse to God's

¹ Is. lvii. 15 ; John xiv. 20, cf. Rev. xxi. 3.

holiness, but by a regenerate life which is in sympathy with God and His kingdom.

Christian God-consciousness, quickened by the Spirit through personal faith, is primarily ethical, not primarily intellectual. True ideas of God are not inferences from the phenomena of external nature, nor from the moral instincts and spiritual tendencies of the heart; nor are true ideas to be formed by natural reflection on the facts and teachings of the Bible. God is not an object demanding metaphysical investigation, of whom it is requisite first to have some legitimate scientific conception before we may rationally yield ourselves to Him, and possess Him. God addressing us and embracing us in His Son is primarily the object of confidence and love. In His incarnate Son the Father loves us; we in turn are constrained to love the Father in the Son. We by a free act of will first embrace the truth of divine revelation; then possessing the truth and being possessed by it, the truth fills the intellect and gives direction to its activities in the endeavor to form a true conception of God and of His relations to man. The notions of the intellect do not regulate the action of the will relatively to God; but the truth approved and appropriated by the spontaneous activity of the person inspires the intellect; and the theologian seeks to govern logical thought conformably to the law of truth in the endeavor to formulate a self-consistent God-conception.

This consciousness of God growing forth from the divine communion of love becomes in the regenerate thinker a source of theological knowledge. The theologian himself becomes a fountain, a secondary fountain, from which the knowledge of things spiritual and heavenly may be developed. Says our Lord: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness; but shall

have the light of life."¹ The obedience of faith in Christ is the new life. His followers live this life; they live it by following the light. Possessing the life, they have the living light, or the light of life-communion with Him. They have the light because they have the life. The life is a shining light. Accordingly our Lord says: "Ye are the light of the world."² Not only that His disciples are prominent objects which all men see, but also that they are like a burning focus whence divine radiance is shed forth into the world. Hence it is added: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works."³ The primordial light kindles in the believing soul a lesser light which illumines Christian reason and guides, more or less completely, the processes of thought on theological issues.

The same principle is taught under a different image by our Lord in his interview at Jacob's well with the woman of Samaria. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."⁴ The water given by Christ is living water; it not only supports existing life, but begets a new life; and that new life becomes in the soul a spring whence issue streams unto everlasting life. The immanent Christ works in the functions of the soul according to the wealth of new-creating love which He has in His transcendent state. A Christian is a *Christopher*, as the post-apostolic Church was accustomed to say, a bearer of the glorified Christ; therefore he becomes active, both ethically and intellectually, in developing a Christian knowledge of God.

¹ John viii. 12.

³ Matt. v. 16, cf. John iv. 14.

² Matt. v. 14.

⁴ John iv. 14.

§ 13.

The Christian consciousness is the spiritual soil on which the Christian science of divine truth grows. Although this consciousness has but one principle which vitalizes all systematic thought concerning God, namely, Christ in us, yet it has many external conditions. Natural science, philosophy, art, secular culture, the intellectual and social status of the age, and whatever modifies public sentiment or general habits of thought, operate as stimulating forces in advancing or retarding theological knowledge. Being truly a human science, theology sympathizes with all great epochs in history.

1. A harvest grows on a fertile soil. Two forces are interactive in producing ripe grain: the living seed and the fertile field. The type, the law and the plastic powers of the plant slumber in the vitality of the seed; but the material on which depends the development of the seed and the formation of the plant is in the soil. If the soil supplies the nutriment which the growing plant requires, the plant matures and multiplies after its kind. If sunlight or moisture or if needed chemical qualities of soil be wanting, the vital principle of the seed may perish, or if it grows and multiplies itself, the harvest will be inferior.

True divine knowledge grows on Christian soil. Two factors enter into Christian theology: Christ and rational thought. Jesus Christ is the living seed; the human soul, or ethical and rational life of the Christian, is the soil. The type, the law, and the contents of Christian theology proceed by development from the living seed, from the glorified Christ through the Spirit immanent in the believer; but the spiritual capacities and the rational activities of the believer are the conditions on which depend the

development of faith-life and faith-consciousness into rational knowledge, a knowledge of God conformable to the laws and categories of human reason. In itself the living seed sown in the soul is an infinite fulness; but this fulness becomes the personal possession of the Christian community only in proportion to the capacity of appropriation. As this capacity grows and is better adjusted to the nature of Christian truth, theological science will make legitimate progress. If the capacity be feeble, or unapt, or perverted by anti-Christian falsehood, theological science will be stationary, or formal, or even retrogressive. As poor soil or unfavorable weather occasions the failure of a crop, so does a stagnant spiritual life, an unreceptive mind and perverse philosophical habits of thought occasion deficiencies, errors, and even absurdities in theology. Divine science sympathizes at every epoch of human history with the status and the methods of philosophy and natural science.

Faith-consciousness and rational activity, incited and sustained by Christian faith, are not necessarily commensurate. Faith-life and faith-consciousness may be richer and better than a system of theology; for in Christianity the practical may for a time lead the theoretical and be far in advance of it. Illogical modes of reasoning and pagan principles of philosophy may hold sway in the sphere of thought or in a system of theological science, long after Christ has become by faith the possession and joy of the soul. This principle is true even as regards morals. A Christian community may without a sense of wrong perpetuate social and moral habits which are contrary to the genius of Christianity.¹ Only by de-

¹ Human slavery was perpetuated in the Christian communities of Europe (and America) for from twelve to eighteen centuries.

grees does faith-life leaven and transform civilization. So only step by step during the logical processes of the ages does the Christian truth possessed by the Church overcome the ancient principles of pagan philosophy, and develop modes of apprehension and a system of theology which are approximately answerable to Christian truth. The rational ability of Christian thinkers, conditions the degree of force and consistency with which the immanent Christ asserts His infinite wealth in formulas and systems of thought.

The lack of consistency may also prevail in the reverse order. Theory is commonly better than practice. Christian teaching imparts instruction which is more thoroughly Christian than the ethical life of an individual or a community. The knowledge of God's law may be much more scriptural than is the actual obedience.¹ Either kind of disproportion is abnormal; both illustrate the disorganization which moral evil has wrought in human nature. Says Paul: "For not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do." "But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice." A contradiction of a person with self, experienced in different degrees by all earnest men, whether born of the Spirit or not.²

¹ The fearful disorders and corruptions of the Church during the medieval ages, which good men and councils sought in vain for several centuries before the Reformation to remove.

² Rom. vii. 16-19. Paganism is conscious of the same contradiction: "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor." Ovid, *Metamor.*, bk. vii. 20.

2. The Church and the world, the history of regenerate human life and the history of unregenerate human life, touch and reciprocally act upon one another at all points. On the world the Church bestows spiritual blessings; and in turn by appropriating individuals, families and nations, the Church introduces into her communion both the strong and the weak, the good and evil at hand in the world. "All things are yours." As our Lord called the disciples of John Baptist to follow Him and become His apostles, as He chose Saul, the learned and zealous defender of Jewish Phariseeism, so on every stage of history He by His word and Spirit lays hold of the high and the low, the noble and the ignoble, men of genius and men of ordinary endowments, and imparts to them the gifts of His redeeming love; the end being to make them the possessors of His life and salvation.¹ But no blessings are bestowed magically, and no moral nor intellectual changes are wrought magically. James enters with his controlling proclivities for the ceremonial law; Peter with his bold and impulsive temperament; John with his contemplative and receptive mind; Saul with his logical discipline, his classical culture and rabbinical learning; Clement and Origen with their Neoplatonic habit of philosophizing; Irenæus with his realistic tendencies; Basil the Great, Gregory Nyssa, Eusebius, Athanasius and all the thinkers of the Greek Church of the Nicene and ante-Nicene age, with their idea of the native indifference of the will toward good and evil. From the one direction the distinctive features of Jewish culture, and from the opposite direction the distinctive features of pagan culture become active forces in Church life and theological science. This law operates

¹ I Cor. i. 26-29.

uninterruptedly. Ever appropriating men from a foreign or anti-Christian realm to her own service, the Church breathes into them an heavenly spirit, whilst with them the virus of an earthly spirit may enter her communion. Whatever is true and good in philosophy, science, art and social organization, or whatever in society, art, science and philosophy is false and evil gains access to the Christian community, and becomes a modifying force for the worse or for the better. Fermentation ensues in the sphere of morality and of scientific thought, a continuous process in which Christian life and Christian thought seek to assimilate the good and overcome or eliminate the evil.

As the Church and the world continuously act and react on each other, the intellectual, moral, social and civil status of the world becomes a condition and a modifier of theology; for whatever serves to enlarge or circumscribe Christian reflection, or to correct or vitiate the processes of logical reasoning, so far forth qualifies or disqualifies the theologian for the legitimate development of the contents of Christian faith in the sphere of rational thought. The prevalence of valid theories in natural science and of sound metaphysical speculation disciplines and strengthens the mental faculties, and thus exerts a healthful influence; whilst baseless traditions, inherited superstitions, unscientific theories and false hypotheses in philosophy hinder the healthy growth of divine knowledge. Secular science and philosophy do not become a source of divine knowledge; neither can supply any new material to the infinite fulness of truth living potentially in faith-consciousness; but philosophy and science, or any other secular forces, are conditions on which the progress of theology is ever depending; conditions, inasmuch as secular forces affect the rational activity of Christian theologians

by improving or deteriorating their powers and methods of thought.

3. The modifying force of secular life and thought may be plainly seen in all periods of Church history. The principles of Neoplatonic philosophy had a plastic influence on Clement, Origen and the entire Alexandrian school in the 3d century and onward. This philosophy was at the bottom of the Gnostic and Docetic errors with which the theology of the Nicene age had to do battle. The Platonic principle that matter, *ὕλη*, is essentially evil underlay the Manichean heresy, and the ascetic doctrines and practices of Greek and Latin monasticism. Dr. Schaff says: "The great ideal of virtue was, according to the prevailing notion of the Fathers and Councils, not so much to transform the world and sanctify the natural things and relations created by God, as to flee from the world into monastic seclusion, and voluntarily renounce property and marriage." . . . "The ascetic principle . . . ruled more or less the entire morality and piety of the ancient and medieval Church."¹ The theory that the will prior to an act of positive choice is indifferent to good or evil, modified the Church doctrine concerning the effects of the fall, also the doctrine on the necessity and meritoriousness of works.

At the council of Nice and during the post-Nicene age, the philosophic ideas of essence and subsistence, of being and hypostasis, entered into the metaphysical controversies respecting the constitution of the Godhead and the person of our Lord. The genuine content of the approved dogma was developed from faith-life and faith-consciousness, not from current philosophic ideas; nevertheless these ideas were the rational forms according to which the data of Christian faith were shaped and adjusted. The *source* of

¹ Schaff's Church History, vol. ii. §104.

positive divine knowledge amid all conflicts was the living Christ whom the Church by faith possessed.

In the middle ages the logic of Aristotle came into competition with Platonism. Scholasticism was predominantly a theological system which aimed at supporting Church dogmas by means of Aristotelian formulas and methods. The subtle questions and the absurd discussions which grew out of scholasticism in the 14th and 15th centuries were largely due to a one-sided and perverted use of logic.¹

The Reformation was heir to the theology and Christology of the ecumenical councils; and the reformers were in positive sympathy with the revival of classic learning which at that time was moving the nations of Europe. Under the moulding influence of these Christian and secular forces, the heroes of that age joined issue with Romanism on the great questions of soteriology and eschatology. The antagonisms of Rome and of fanatical sects on the matter of Church authority, personal salvation and the rule of faith, and the demoralization of the Roman curia, of the priesthood and of the monasteries, were conditions under which the new scriptural principle of salvation by faith in Christ was developed; in consequence evangelical doctrines all bear an impress received from the ecclesiastical conflicts and logical issues of that age.

During the last hundred and fifty years theology has taken a new attitude. Issues in many respects altogether

¹It was the task of the scholastic divines "to lay the foundation of a system of modern Christian philosophy on a system of doctrines which had been handed down from antiquity in a partially corrupt form. But in the absence of an independent philosophical system, they again had recourse to ancient philosophy, and formed an alliance with Aristotelianism, quite as unnatural as that which former theologians had formed with Platonism." Hagenbach's *Doct. Hist.*, vol. I., p. 390.

peculiar have arisen. The deism of England, the naturalism of France and the rationalism of Germany have brought into the foreground the truths of natural religion, the laws of the natural world and the inborn rights of reason; hence theology has had to meet the profound problems concerning the relation of nature to revelation, of reason to faith and of ethnic religions to Christianity. When these changed conditions confronted theological science, the old methods of apologetics proved inadequate. To meet the demands of the modern age, theology advanced to a higher intellectual plane, and has found it necessary to grasp Christian truth from a new and different point of view.

Christianity as to substance is in all ages identical with itself; Christ glorified, manifest through the Spirit to faith-consciousness, is on every plane of progress the only source of sound theological knowledge; but that knowledge is developed at one epoch predominantly under one aspect, and again predominantly under another aspect, according to the demand made by the intellectual and social conditions of an age. Sympathy with secular knowledge and culture, also contact with false theories of science, or false systems of philosophy, or with a perverted culture, serve to shape the method of a system, and condition the freedom and wealth of theological science. In the nature of the case theology neither can nor should it desire to surmount these conditions; yet these conditions neither add any elements to its intrinsic resources nor may they rightfully become its teachers.

4. Theology being a science, it is as regards its development and progress akin to all sciences. From the whole circle of human knowledge it differs by its *object*, that is, by the theme which it develops and organizes according to

the laws of reason; but as to logical method and the laws of growth theology does not differ. Physiology differs from psychology as to its object, the source of its contents. The one investigates the living body, and unfolds into system the results of investigation; the other observes the laws and qualities of the living soul and from the data of self-consciousness constructs psychological science. Both pursue the logical method; both are alike subject to the conditions of scientific progress. Theology is as truly the product of rational thought as psychology; but as psychology draws its material, not from the body but from the soul, so theology derives its material, not from the soul as given in self-consciousness, but from Jesus Christ, the God-man glorified, as He is set forth by Holy Scripture and given in Christian consciousness. Christian theology and psychology differ as widely as the God-man and the human soul, yet as to method both are governed by the categories and laws of thought, as to progress both are subject to manifold human conditions. But whatever be prevalent modes of thought, whether more or less favorable to profound and broad self-knowledge, the source whence self-knowledge can proceed does not change. Whatever be the intelligence of the age or the culture of society, psychology inquires exclusively of the soul respecting the soul. Theology is related to its source according to the same law. One age, one system of philosophy, one theory of natural science may be more congenial than another, yet theology can be enriched no more from theories of natural science or from philosophic systems when sympathetic than when hostile. When sympathetic the rational activity of Christian scholars is better adapted to the needs of theology; hence theology may be enriched and become more self-consistent, not because it appro-

priates materials from the sphere of philosophy or of natural science, but because theologians become better fitted to develop systematically the boundless wealth of their divine resources.

§ 14.

Christian consciousness, if true and normal, is ever vitally connected with the transcendent Christ. The objective source of knowledge, and this source in consciousness, though distinct, are a unity. The Christ immanent is in the common consciousness and in individual consciousness a manifestation of the Christ transcendent.

I. Jesus Christ glorified, living and reigning at the right hand of God, is to be clearly and definitely distinguished from His indwelling by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. The former is perfect and final; the latter is imperfect and progressive.

His heavenly exaltation, the infinite fulness of His divine-human life and the perfection of His redemptive virtue, are directly related to and dependent upon His own personal history—on His humiliation by birth of the Virgin Mary, the sinless development of ideal humanity in the bosom of a sinful world, His perfect obedience to the will of His Father even unto the death on the cross, the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies respecting the promised Messiah, His victory over death and the kingdom of darkness, and the completion of His incarnate history by His ascension. The perfect revelation of the triune Godhead and the redemption of the fallen human race by His life on earth under the condemnation of violated law, were achieved by the fidelity of His own persistent will, achieved in opposition to the religious errors of the Jews and to the

fierce assaults of Satan. He came unto His own, but His own received Him not.¹ Neither the ignorance, nor the spiritual obtuseness, nor the virulent animosity of Scribes and Pharisees was a hindrance to His fidelity. Nor was the sympathy of the multitudes, nor the discerning penetration and confession of Peter, nor the faithfulness of the love of John, the condition either of the virtue of His atoning sacrifice or of His triumph over death and hades.

But the *indwelling* Christ is not thus independent of the will and the understanding of men. As He is present and active in the Church by His Holy Spirit, the Church possesses His fulness only in proportion to her ability to possess Him. He fashions and fills her ethical life in the degree that by faith believers yield obedience to Him as their law. He shines into the soul, illumining the intelligence and guiding rational activity in the degree that the eye of the soul has strength to take in His effulgence and the rational faculties are spiritually disciplined. Said our Lord to His disciples before His exaltation: I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.² The disciples needed an endowment of spiritual power which they were to receive on the day of Pentecost. "At this very moment," says Godet, "He had just told His disciples so many things which they could only half understand!" Until the advent of the Spirit they would be lacking the ability to receive and use "many things" pertaining to His kingdom which were to be revealed to them. But even the Pentecostal gift was not in the final sense adequate. Peter was at once empowered to preach the Gospel in demonstration of the Spirit³ at Jerusalem. But his notions of his apostolic mission were narrow. The compass of Christ's saving love was hidden from him. He needed a vision in a dream

¹ John i. 11.² John xvi. 12.³ Acts ii.

in order to become willing to go and preach the Gospel to Cornelius. Even after that his hereditary Jewish prejudice against Gentiles betrayed him into dissimulation at Antioch.¹ Though in Jerusalem he boldly obeyed God rather than men, and though he had faith to work many miracles, yet this apostle could only by slow degrees grow into the meaning of the apostolic commission: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of *all* the nations," Gentiles and Jews alike. The immanent Christ was limited by the prejudices and narrowness of His chosen apostle. This law is perpetual and universal. Christ lives in us in His infinite fulness; but his fulness is for our ethical character, our Christian consciousness, especially for the reason and for logical thought, potential rather than actual during the militant history of the Church, though as the ages come and go this potentiality asserts its wealth in conduct, knowledge and thought with increasing fulness. As the infinitude of the only begotten Son was incarnate in the finitude of Jesus, so the absolute fulness of the glorified Christ dwelling in His body, the Church, governs and enlightens believers. Christian consciousness possesses the Truth and the modes of logical thought are adjusted to its spiritual contents in the degree that consciousness and thought are by the Spirit transformed and ennobled.

2. Though Christ in us is circumscribed by our moral and intellectual imperfections, yet these two distinct things, the glorified Christ and Christ in us, are a unity. There are not two different fountains of ethical force and heavenly light, one in heaven, the other in man. The Christ glorified is the Christ in us. The objective source of knowledge abiding in man through man's faith, is active in him, the subject of Christian consciousness. Christ immanent is the

¹ Gal. ii. 11, 12.

transcendent Christ who by His Spirit has taken possession of the souls that have given Him access ; and He possesses them more and more fully as with less and less reserve they receive Him. Yet Christ in them, seeking to gain access to the whole of manhood, and succeeding only by slow degrees to fill the soul with His fulness and transform rational thought into His likeness, is the identical Christ who, seated on the mediatorial throne, has all authority in heaven and on earth.

In this respect theology is analogous to psychology. Psychology and the human soul are in one sense the same ; in another they are not the same. Man seeks to know man ; yet man is to himself but partially known. The soul is a territory where there are depths of life psychology has never fathomed, and mountain heights it has never scaled. There are traces of an historical process running back into the early dawn of humanity which it is closely studying, but has neither described nor even discovered. There are also premonitions and anticipations of upheavals and transformations in the future which it discerns and tries to forecast, but cannot portray. For ages the soul has been observing the soul, classifying her phenomena, and constructing the science of herself, yet new problems arise at every step in the progress of self-knowledge ; and to-day psychology is only an incomplete science. No psychological system is commensurate with the life and truth of manhood. Self is richer and grander than the most complete self-consciousness. So is a Christ-bearer, he who by faith possesses Christ, only a partially explored spiritual region to Christian consciousness. Whether we contemplate the living constitution of the Church, or only the individual believer, either is an infinite wealth of positive spiritual truth, which the Chris-

tian consciousness seeks to make its own, and Christian thought seeks to construct into logical system ; yet theology is ever learning that the Christian soul has deeper depths of life than have yet been fathomed, and richer heavenly resources than have ever been developed. Great and wonderful as the human soul may be, the immanent Christ is infinitely richer and more glorious. Here there are ocean depths and mountain heights, an overhanging canopy and a circling horizon, which challenge perception and thought with greater authority and power than the natural earth challenges the geologist or the natural heavens challenge the astronomer.

3. Christ immanent in the Christian community, as in the individual believer, is the presence and manifestation of Christ transcendent. What the glorified Christ, as Revealer and Redeemer is in heaven, He by the Holy Spirit becomes in His people by union with them. As He is in the Father and the Father is in Him, so are regenerate men in Christ and Christ in regenerate men. "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them ; that they may be one, even as we are one ; I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one ; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me."¹ The Father is manifested by the Son incarnate ; and the Son incarnate is manifested in His disciples. Christ is in His people, and His people are in Christ. But Christ immanent is the consequence of Christ ascended and perfected in the glory of the Father. Hence as the *self*-consciousness of the individual Christian and of the Christian community increases in breadth and fulness, this growing consciousness is to be regarded as progress in the self-manifestation of the glori-

¹ John xvii. 22, 23.

fied Christ by virtue of His union in the Holy Spirit with His people.

To the doctrine of such vital union of Christ glorified with his believing people, or that He truly lives in them as the vine lives in the branches, no objection can be raised on the ground that it is either irreligious or unchristian. The words of our Lord are explicit. Equally explicit are the words of John and Paul in their Epistles.¹ "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."² Nor can it be said that theological science may not consistently take cognizance of the mystical forces of Christian life. Psychology is not unscientific when it recognizes in human nature the operations of living forces which have not been measured nor defined; on the contrary, psychology becomes more truly scientific by admitting the existence of unknown realms which are to be explored in order that psychology may be more thorough and more perfect. Christian theology likewise becomes more truly scientific when, dissatisfied with present attainments or traditional conceptions, she opens her eyes to the undeveloped mines of heavenly truth which living Christianity carries hidden within herself.

Vitally one with her ascended Lord, the Church is the spiritual realm on earth which He inhabits, to the end that He may ever announce Himself with increasing power and that she may ever come to a clearer understanding of the positive truth which by faith she affirms. As it is not unpsychological to believe that the human soul is greater than psychology, and in consequence that the soul has ever

¹ Cf. I John iv. 12, 13.

² Gal. ii. 20.

been learning from herself; so the principle is not untheological that the immanent Christ, or the Christian soul, is greater than current theology, and that in consequence the Christian scholar may advance his knowledge of God by reflection on himself and on the actual Christianity of our times in their vital relation to Christ.

§ 15.

Christ glorified, as He addresses our faith in the books of the New Testament, is ever the norm of Christian life and of the validity of Christian consciousness. Yet the symmetrical development of the immanent principle in ethical and rational thought conditions the degree of purity and fulness with which the scriptural norm nourishes sound theological knowledge.

1. Christ as proclaimed by the spoken word of His apostles and declared by the written word of the New Testament is the critical standard of all true opinions concerning Him. The authority and sufficiency of the New Testament cannot be superseded. The New Testament performed a function for the Church at the time when its several books were written, and it performs a function also for the Church in all subsequent ages. But these functions are to be distinguished. For the apostolic churches these books not only set forth the infinite wealth of Christian truth, but also expressed the truth in a way and manner which was adjusted to their peculiar and manifold spiritual, moral and social needs. For the churches of our age the New Testament teaches the same infinite wealth of Christian truth, but not in a way and manner directly adapted to the present status of the world and to the existing needs of the different branches of the Evangelical Protestant

Church. In one respect the New Testament books contain, no less for us than for the apostolic churches, the wholeness of the truth concerning Christ and His kingdom; for they are the inspired teaching of Christ Himself by His Spirit. But they address us under different circumstances. Immense changes have been wrought in the civilization of the world; also in the organization, intelligence, position and relations of the Church. Our age, no less than the apostolic age, requires that Christian truth be taught under a form which is adapted to existing conditions. The Church now has wants peculiar to the 19th century, just as then she had wants peculiar to the first century; wants that must be met by the pulpit and by theological science. Hence sermons suitable for our times will differ, not in spiritual substance, but as to their relativeness, from the sermons of Peter and Paul; and a theology adapted to the Christian civilization and culture of our century must differ from the theology of the New Testament; not indeed as to its Messianic contents, but as to mode of apprehension, as to structure and adaptation.

2. This difference is only relative. The variation of a sound theology adjusted to the actual needs of the Church of the 19th century from the biblical theology of the New Testament, may be illustrated by the variation of one epistle from another, or by the variation of the Gospel of John from the synoptic gospels.

The Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Colossians exhibit the same glorified Christ. The essential truth underlying and pervading both epistles is the same; yet though written by the same apostle, the presuppositions, the scope and adaptations are widely different. The epistles differ from one another as much as the religious status, the Judaizing errors, and the temptations of Chris-

tians in Galatia differ from the religious and theological status at Colosse brought about by the commingling of hypotheses of pagan philosophy with Christian truth. The epistle addressed to the Galatians, if sent to the Church at Colosse, would teach that Church the great evangelical principle of salvation by faith without the works of the law, but the method of argument and the peculiar adaptation to the Galatians would for the Church at Colosse be unmeaning. At Colosse there was no strong tendency to observe the rite of circumcision as the condition of salvation ; and the reproofs and special expostulations of the apostle would have had no direct application to them. The same lack of fitness will at once be apparent if we suppose that the Epistle to the Colossians had been addressed to the Churches of Galatia. A similar illustration would be afforded by supposing that the Epistle to the Hebrews as it now is had been addressed to the Church at Philippi. The same unchangeable fulness of Christian truth was taught under one form at one time, and under another form at another time. Under one aspect Jesus of Nazareth was set forth by St. Mark, and under another very different aspect by St. John. Yet however great the variation of John from Mark, or of the Epistle to the Romans from the first Epistle of Peter, or of any one book from the rest, all the gospels and epistles belong to the apostolic period and are nicely adapted to the historic characteristics of this period ; but just for this reason they are not in the same sense nicely adapted to the characteristics of our age. If the books set forth truth scientifically or abstractly, like the Geometry of Euclid, they would be comparatively indifferent to the times when they were written, and might be as well suited to the Churches of the 19th century as to the apostolic churches. But they

teach Christ concretely, not scientifically. They teach Him in the living relations of their age. When the same Christian truth is now to be set forth intelligibly, it must also be taught concretely, or according to the living relations of the Church and the world of our time.

The difference of teaching adapted to present religious and moral needs from the teaching of the New Testament writers is analogous to the difference of these writers from one another. As the Epistle to the Galatians had to differ greatly from the Epistle to the Colossians, and the Gospel according to John from the Gospel according to Mark, so must sermons by preachers of the Gospel to-day differ from sermons preached by primitive Christians; and so the Christian dogmatics adapted to the social, scientific and philosophical culture of the 19th century must differ from biblical theology. Yet no preaching and no theology is Christian that contradicts the New Testament, or fails to be in harmony with the truth of the glorified Christ underlying and pervading particular forms of representation in the New Testament. The truth concerning Himself and His mediatorial work as written by chosen men empowered and qualified by His Spirit is the touchstone by which moral conduct, Christian experience and theological opinions are to be tested. Christ transcendent, mirrored by the inspired word, is the norm of the Christ immanent in Christian sentiment, knowledge, science, words and deeds.

3. But the norm of Christian faith and practice presented by the books of the New Testament does not at once duly assert its moulding force on Christian dogmatics.

It was one of the great achievements of the Reformation to discern the fundamental principle that Holy Scripture is the ultimate standard of faith and practice, to express the principle definitely, and to maintain it firmly.

The validity of this principle has been asserted and vindicated by all branches of the Evangelical Church through all the vicissitudes of their history ; and it was never held more intelligently and decidedly than at the present day. Nevertheless the principle itself in its whole significance has as yet not been thoroughly and completely grasped. It was not thoroughly mastered nor perfectly applied by the reformers ; though the Evangelical Church has since gained better insight into its full meaning, yet it does not now reign with legitimate force in theological science. The right use of the scriptural norm lags behind the recognition of its validity and the theoretic affirmation of it.

The disproportion between the theoretic affirmation of the Scripture norm and the legitimate application of it neither compromises its truth nor detracts from the fidelity of evangelical theology. The new idea that the word of God is the only critical standard of Christian belief and Christian teaching can be asserted and applied only in the degree in which the whole of Christian truth as set forth by the New Testament is itself definitely and completely apprehended. A remarkable divergence may be seen among the reformers themselves. The most prominent original leaders of the two branches of the Reformation, Zwingli and Luther, affirmed the formal principle with equal explicitness ; but it had not the same force for each. Zwingli maintained that Scripture was the sole authority for any Christian doctrine, and therefore only such doctrines were to be held for Christian truth as were by Scripture directly taught. The consequence was that beliefs and ceremonies which could not be definitely supported by the authority of the written word were to be condemned or set aside. Luther, on the contrary, held the formal principle with more freedom. Whatever the written

word taught or enjoined was to be believed and obeyed; and whatever it forbade or condemned was to be regarded as false and wrong. But the written word was not the exclusive warrant for the truth of a religious opinion or the propriety of a ceremony; hence he approved or tolerated opinions and ceremonies which, though lacking scriptural authority, were not contradictory to the teaching of Scripture;¹ condemning only what the Bible condemns, there were many matters in regard to which, it was held, that the Church was not bound by the letter of the word, but was free to exercise her own judgment.

This difference in the application of the formal principle lived on in the two evangelical confessions; the Zwinglian conception of Scripture characterizing the Reformed Churches of Switzerland, France, and other countries, and the conception of Luther characterizing the churches of the Lutheran confession. The difference of application stamped an impress on these two branches of the Reformation which has not been wholly effaced during a history of nearly four centuries.

That the reformers did not grasp their own great idea in its wholeness may also be seen from the manner in which both confessions used the Bible in supporting their cardinal doctrine of salvation. The New Testament was taken as one book; and so much stress was laid on its unity that the marked differences, even the contrasts, of the several parts were left in great measure out of view. Differences were indeed perceived, and efforts were made to harmonize

¹ In his Letters, Luther says: "Nullas ceremonias damno, nisi quae pugnent cum evangelio; ceteras omnes in ecclesia nostra servo integras." De Wette's edition, III, 294, quoted by Hagenbach. With this judgment the XXXIX. Articles of the Church of England concur. Art. XXXIV.

them; but the differences did not enter constructively into the formulation of doctrine; and the efforts made to maintain the harmony of the various writers did not proceed on the assumption that the characteristics of John and Paul, Peter and James, were all equally necessary to a full conception of Christian truth; but one portion of the New Testament was used as the criterion for judging other portions. Strictly speaking, the New Testament was not as a whole the norm either for the pulpit or for theological science; instead this dignity was accorded especially to the epistles of St. Paul; nor did all his epistles rise to the same position of authority; *two* were prominent. The Epistle to the Romans and the Epistle to the Galatians, were regarded as teaching most definitely and forcibly the cardinal truth of the Christian salvation, justification by faith in Jesus Christ without the works of the law. Hence these epistles stood in the foreground; they exerted a controlling influence in shaping evangelical doctrine, and in the formation of catechisms and other symbols.

Two additional facts may be mentioned. The one is the well-known rejection by Luther of James as an "epistle of straw,"¹ on the ground that it was irreconcilable with the doctrine of Paul taught in his Epistle to the Romans; a condemnation, however, which he subsequently retracted. The other fact is that the Heidelberg Catechism is constructed on the basis of the Epistle to the Romans; though no close student of this confession, the ripest fruit of the Reformed Church of the 16th century, can fail to perceive in its irenical tone the positive influence of the Apostle John. As the Creed is taken to be the sum of

¹ "Epistola Straminea." Luther in his Preface to the New Testament.

Christian truth and becomes the law of Christian doctrine, the Catechism transcends the limitations which otherwise would have been imposed.

It could not be otherwise than that in progress of time both Christian experience and theological science would come to a clearer recognition of the equal significance of other Pauline epistles, and of the immeasurable worth of the gospels and epistles of John; and as a consequence then the entire New Testament would exert constructive force in the development of doctrines coördinate with the books which had a preëminent moulding influence when the confessions of the Evangelical Church were framed. Hence the changes of sentiment and doctrine which have come to prevail during the 19th century in nearly all branches of Protestant Christendom.

4. From these historical facts the inference is not to be drawn that the leading doctrines of the reformers are untenable or that evangelical theology is unworthy of confidence.

In the nature of the case it is not supposable that the full import of the Scripture principle should at once be measured and in all respects perfectly applied. The supposition would be both unscriptural and unpsychological. Time was necessary, not the period of any one man's earthly life, nor one age only, but a series of generations and a succession of ages, consistently to unfold and apply a great idea, definitely enunciated for the first time in the history of the Church. The reformers used the new idea with great success; but it wrought with as much formative force in subsequent periods as in the days of the Reformation; and since the 16th century it has as really as then produced richer fruits of divine knowledge. They neither did nor could exhaust the biblical principle; but they raised the

Bible to such a position of authority and influence as it had not held since the Nicene age. Besides, the new idea gave impulse to free and independent biblical studies which have been steadily progressing from one generation to another onward to our time ; and now the sacred volume is attracting to itself with commanding force a degree of critical scrutiny, of varied scholarship, and faithful, reverential study which is extraordinary. The consequence has been real progress in the external and internal knowledge of the written word. Our age, faithful to the legacy of religious freedom bequeathed to evangelical Christendom by the spiritual heroism of the reformers, is asserting and applying their new idea in the same spirit in which it was asserted and applied by themselves. Hence the principle that the Bible is the true norm of Christian faith and doctrine is less restricted in its influence. It controls theological science with greater consistency. The Church knows more of this norm than it could know then, and discriminates more justly between the essential and the accidental in it, between the unchangeable essential truth and the transient application of the truth to the circumstances of the apostolic period.

If the Evangelical Church be faithful to her trust, the same process will continue to go forward. Three types of apostolic teaching are now distinctly recognized ; and each is a factor in the formation of Christian doctrine. The study of the Bible has been broadening and enriching the knowledge of Christian truth. By such enrichment Christian scholars are positively qualified to be still more and more enriched ; for the resources at hand are inexhaustible. In the degree that the various types of representation addressing us in the books of the New Testament conjointly pervade, shape and advance theology, it becomes possible

for theology to be advanced by the whole truth of the New Testament. These two things, the written word and divine knowledge, or revealed truth and Christian consciousness, condition and affect each other reciprocally. Each circumscribes the efficiency of the other. If the spiritual and scientific capacity of theology be narrow and superficial, the knowledge derived from the study of the word will also be comparatively superficial and narrow. The heavenly light shed by the word will illumine the soul in proportion to the singleness of vision of the spiritual eye. Each also enlarges the efficiency of the other. If the spiritual and scientific capacity of theology be broad and profound, the knowledge derived from the faithful study of the word will also in a corresponding measure be profound and broad. On the other hand, the light of Christ radiant from the word will be glorious in the degree that faith and reason have taken in and have been filled with the glory of the light.

It follows that, though the revealed truth taught by the Bible is unchangeable, the theology of no age, inasmuch as theology is human science, is final. As the theology of the Reformation, rich and scriptural though it be, was capable of modification and progress, a fact which is now almost universally conceded, so the theology of our age is capable of progress. If it be a legitimate outgrowth of the Reformation, if faithful to the formal principle then declared and introduced, and if moulded and enriched by continuous thorough study of the written word, theology cannot stand still. A living Church cannot but grow intensively and extensively; and a living theology cannot but grow in the clearness, consistency and wealth of divine knowledge. But the genuine progress of theology will always include the reciprocal action of two factors, the ob-

jective force of the written word and the scientific capacities of the Church. The glorified Christ speaking in His written word must discipline, ennoble and enrich theology ; yet the mighty powers of Christ pre-suppose a corresponding measure of spiritual and scientific ability in the subjects of divine knowledge. As the subjects of divine knowledge, or theological scholars, increase in spiritual strength and scientific symmetry, the riches of the glorified Christ will be unveiled with greater fulness.

CHAPTER VI.

CRITICAL REVIEW OF DEFECTIVE THEORIES.

§ 16.

The general proposition on the source of theological knowledge which has now been presented involves a denial of the errors and deficiencies, and conserves the elements of truth, which underlie and pervade several contrary theories: Romanism, rationalism, and mysticism. Each has a measure of validity, but neither adequately recognizes the living centrality of the glorified Christ, active perennially by His Spirit in the kingdom of God.

1. The Roman theory affirms two sources of theological knowledge, the written word and tradition.¹ Tradition is independent of the written word ; running parallel with it through the ages of history, it has either equal or superior authority. The general trend of opinion in the Roman

¹Cf. § 2.

Church has been toward the enthronement of tradition ; implying that the Scriptures are not the ultimate standard of Christian doctrine. Tradition justifies and explains Scripture ; thus tradition supports and complements its authority. Whenever a seeming contradiction arises on a matter of dogma or discipline between these two criteria, the meaning of Scripture is to be interpreted and its application governed by the voice of tradition. Thus subordinated to tradition Scripture loses its relative independence. This dependence of the words of inspired men on the justifying and interpreting voice of the pope prevails in sentiment and practice, if it does not at all times in theory.

That this theory has no foundation in truth is a necessary inference from the Christological idea. The conception developed respecting the glorified Christ as the exclusive source of divine light is incompatible with it. The theory assumes that the source of divine knowledge is authoritative *teaching*, or the universal consensus of belief. According to the *dictum* of Vincentius,² that which is held for truth by all believers at all times and in all places is the criterion of dogmatic judgment. The criterion is not objective but subjective, not concrete but abstract.

If Jesus Christ be the only Mediator between God and man, if He be the true life and only Light of the world, the source of theological knowledge can not be doctrinal teaching, either written or oral, even if the teaching were infallible. The source is the *living personality* of our Lord

¹ "Gregory the Great declares that he ascribes to the first four ecumenical councils equal authority with the four Gospels." Hagenbach, Hist. of Doct. I, 324. Pope Leo the Great expressed himself in the same way, claiming inspiration not only for councils, but also for emperors and imperial decretals, and for himself.

² † 450.

Himself, in whom by the communion of the Holy Ghost all the members of the spiritual community stand. The divine-human *Person* takes precedence of all words, thoughts, doctrines. This was the principle of knowledge for evangelists and apostles; it is equally the principle of knowledge for all members of the mystical body, available for each according to the measure of his capacity of knowing Him.

The opinion that our Lord during the forty days intervening between His resurrection and ascension made private revelations of supreme value to His disciples which complement and modify Scripture, revelations orally transmitted but consciously withheld from the record, is gratuitous. There are no facts in the gospels or epistles, and nothing in the tenor of any New Testament book, that warrant this assumption. On the contrary, in as far as the record has a bearing on the assumption, it supports the belief that the New Testament contains all the facts and all the teaching that belong essentially to the whole of Christianity. Doubtless many miracles, perhaps many parables, are not recorded, and many details of recorded events are wanting;¹ but not a line of the original image of Truth, the absence of which would convert the picture into a distortion. One fact is given which shows that the same lack of spiritual insight into the kingdom of God prevailing among the disciples before the crucifixion continued among them after the resurrection onward to the hour of the ascension. "They therefore when they were come together asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority."² Obviously

¹ Mark i. 32-34; iii. 10; iv. 1, 2; iv. 33, 34.

² Acts i. 6, 7.

the current false conceptions of the Messianic kingdom had controlling influence on the judgment of the disciples onward to the day of the ascension. The hope of a literal external fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies had not been dissipated by the miracle of the resurrection, nor by the extraordinary manifestations of their risen Lord. Instead of answering the inquiry, Jesus refers them to the promise of the Comforter: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The books of the New Testament form a unique volume. Romanists as well as Protestants hold that it has divine authority. A volume so unique, possessing divine authority, excludes the opinion that oral tradition, or any ordinary record, may be coördinated with it. The image of the kingdom of God drawn by these writers is the true image. We are logically shut up to the recognition of the portraiture of Jesus Christ and of His kingdom sketched by their hand as complete, final, sufficient.

2. Rationalism, also, at least in theory, affirms two independent sources of knowledge, the written word and the human reason. History shows gradual progress in the false attitude of reason toward the Christian religion.¹

With the growth of unbelief it laid claim to higher functions. When the rationalistic tendency of modern times be-

¹ There are definite rationalistic tendencies observable in the middle ages. John Scotus Erigena, who flourished during the latter half of the 9th century, held "that self-consciousness is the last source of religious knowledge." Standemeier says of him that he "may in a certain sense be called the author of rationalism; but his rationalism is very different from" the vulgar and perverse form of rationalism developed in the 18th century. Cf. Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doct.* I, p. 416. Modern rationalism is commonly regarded as beginning with Semler, 1725-1791. Cf. Hase, *Kirchengeschichte*, 2 447.

gan with Semler, reason claimed the right to interpret doctrines taught by the word, and to account for them. It even tendered its services to faith. It would aid in the work of discriminating between true and false meanings. The spirit of the times conceded the right to the assumption of this office. Then reason professed ability to render still greater services. It proposed to justify Bible doctrines by independent reflection and argument; for example, the philosopher Wolf.¹ Rational thought would strengthen the foundations of faith. But in the very act of rendering Christianity friendly offices, reason, instead of being guided by the eye of faith, arrogated to itself the right of independent judgment. From the act of discriminating by its own methods between true and false meanings, it proceeds to put accepted interpretations to the test. Fundamental doctrines are cited before its bar, and cited for trial. In the light of its own principles it asserts the right to determine whether recorded facts are reasonable, or intrinsically probable. Some are accepted; others are rejected. Finally the last stage of rationalism is reached. Reason boldly rejects all recorded facts, and all apostolic interpretations of Christian facts, which are not in accord with her *a priori* judgment of Deity and of possible divine manifestations.

As it appears from the history of rationalism, reason advances step by step in the way of false self-assertion. Subordinating Holy Scripture more and more violently to her supposed authority, reason at length proclaims *herself* the source of truth, the arbiter of divine knowledge, and reduces the authority of the Bible to a cipher.

As regards the intrinsic worth and divine authority of the Bible, rationalism and Romanism occupy in one re-

¹ 1679-1754.

spect the same relative attitude. Both assign to the Book of books a subordinate place. Each affirms a principle of theological knowledge which is independent of and in conflict with the claims of the unique portraiture of Christ and His kingdom given by evangelists and apostles.

If we acknowledge the living Christ to be exclusively the fountain of Christian knowledge, we must assign to human reason, as we do to tradition, a place subordinate to the authority of the written word. Reason, when animated and enlightened and sanctified by the fellowship of faith with Christ, is the *organ* of theological knowledge.¹ No one can either interpret or perceive the Christian truth taught by the written word unless by the grace of the Holy Spirit he lives in the element of Christian truth.² Under these conditions alone is he qualified to see the heavenly light that illumines his soul.

3. Mysticism in the middle ages was a reaction against scholasticism. Scholasticism laid undue stress on the intellect, intellectual knowledge and logical reasoning; overlooking the *life* of Christian faith, the validity of religious *feeling*, and the function of feeling in developing sound doctrine. The sense of this wrong engendered a deep spiritual movement of a directly opposite character. The reactionary movement, overlooking the rights of intellect and of logical thought, aimed at complementing the deficiencies of scholastic theology by recognizing and emphasizing a direct vision of truth based on sympathy between God and man—a vision by which new revelations of God were made to the contemplative soul.

To put emphasis on religious feeling is legitimate, as feeling is an essential factor of Christian life. But the mystics regarded the vision of God by spiritual sympathy

¹ Cf. 25.

² John iii. 3

and spiritual contemplation as a *principle* of divine knowledge.

One class adhered more closely than others to the doctrines of the Church. It was represented by John Tauler,¹ Henry Suso,² John Ruysbroek,³ the author of the anonymous little book entitled, "Büchlein von der Deutschen Theologie," Thomas à Kempis,⁴ and others. The other class boldly departed from Christian doctrines and adopted heretical opinions, of whom Master Eckart⁵ may be taken as the leading representative. Differing widely as to orthodox belief, the two classes nevertheless represented a common tendency, as in both feeling assumed a false prerogative. The orthodox mystics differed from the heretical mystics less in principle than in the *degree* that religious feeling and direct vision were falsely emphasized. Engelhardt says: "The line of demarcation between heterodox and orthodox mysticism, which we find distinctly drawn in the writings of Ruysbroek, was so fine, and might so easily be passed over, that nothing but a firm adherence to that form of belief which was generally adopted and sanctioned by the usage of the Fathers, as well as by the authority of the Church, seemed a sufficient guard against errors."⁶

It is the *principle* of mysticism as it appeared in Master Eckart, Amalrich of Bena and David of Dinanto before the Protestant Reformation, and as subsequently under a greatly modified character it appeared in Jacob Boehme,⁷ and Emanuel Swedenborg⁸ and kindred representatives onward to our own times, which I am characterizing as defective regarding the source of theological knowledge.

¹ † 1361.² † 1365.³ † 1381.⁴ † 1329.⁵ † 1471.⁶ Geschichte der Myst. Theologie, p. 247, quoted by Hagenbach.⁷ † 1620.⁸ † 1777.

That religious feeling is a condition of divine knowledge, or that in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit the regenerate soul may by the eye of faith see transcendent Christian truth, it is not my aim by implication to deny.

Mysticism attributes no authority either to tradition or to human reason. In this respect it differs on the one side from Romanism and on the other from rationalism. In another respect, however, mysticism coincides with both rationalism and Romanism. It either denies or at least fails to affirm, that the written word teaches divine truth in its essential wholeness. "New revelations of the Spirit," it is maintained, "may sometimes be openly opposed to doctrines of the Church, and even to Scripture itself." Those who are "filled with the Holy Spirit are above the law." Men should rather believe the conceptions which proceed from the heart, than evangelical doctrines.¹ Akin to this is the mystical doctrine of revelation as held by prominent representatives of orthodox mysticism, such as Hugo and Richard of St. Victor ; ² they differ from Master Eckart more as to reverence for Church dogmas than as to the principle that new revelations by the Spirit are vouchsafed to the contemplative soul. As a consequence, both classes of mystics deny, either directly or by implication, that the glorified Christ living by the Holy Spirit in His body the Church is the only fountain whence true knowledge of God and of the Messianic kingdom flows.

Mysticism may accord a high order of divine authority to the written word, or it may not, according as in a greater or less degree mystics are governed by the *princi-*

¹ See Mosheim, "De Beguinis," pp. 216, 258.

² Hugo, Count of Blankenburg, canon of St. Victor (alter Augustinus), died 1140. Richard, a native of Scotland, died 1173; styled Magnus Contemplator.

ple of mysticism. If the principle as expressed by Gerson :¹ "Pure intelligence is the cognitive power of the soul, *receiving immediately from God* a natural light, in which and by which first principles become known that they are true and most certain, when their boundaries are discerned," reigns with self-consistent force in a mystical system, Holy Scripture cannot exert controlling influence as the norm of theological doctrine. Mysticism affirms not only the possibility but also the necessity of an *immediate* communion of the soul with God as the condition of the profoundest and most satisfying divine knowledge. An immediate communion with God is a communion not conditioned on the divine-human Mediator. The God-man is not necessarily the organ of all pure divine light. Instead, the human spirit may, by acts of contemplation sustained by direct vision, truly know God.

Closing the senses to the external world and to the visible Church ; withdrawing reflection from human society, from church doctrines and from all created objects, even from the earthly history and the recorded teachings of Jesus Christ, the soul returns within herself, summons her spiritual powers to the office of transcendent vision, and thus beholding the absolute and infinite Good with her own spiritual eyes, she obtains an immediate vision of divine essence and the divine glory. Bathing as it were in the very effulgence of the absolute Godhead, light streams directly from the fountain of all created things upon the contemplative soul and man is illumined with purest

¹ Died 1429; he is to be associated with John Ruysbroek and Thomas à Kempis; styled Doctor Christianissimus. "Intelligentia simplex est vis animae cognitiva, *suscipiens immediata a deo* naturalem quandem lucem, in qua et per quam principia prima cognoscuntur esse vera et certissima terminis apprehensis."

knowledge of the heavenly realm. This immediate relation of the human soul to God, this ability of the spirit to drink the living waters of truth from the original fountain, is revealed by Jesus Christ. Jesus is the noblest exemplar of theosophy. But He is not the personal Mediator in union with whom by faith the purest and noblest communion with God is alone possible.

Judged by sound christological theology, the "*Büchlein von der Deutschen Theologie*" is perhaps among mystical productions of the pre-Reformation age the least objectionable. The little book presents Christ as a guide, a forerunner, the great example of spiritual communion, not as the Redeemer from sin by His death and resurrection, through whom sinners have access to God the Father. The same thing is in a measure true of the '*De Imitatione Christi*,' by Thomas à Kempis.¹ The personal mediatorship of Jesus Christ as by Himself taught in the discourses recorded by John,² or as represented by the Epistle to the Hebrews, is wanting.³

¹ § 1471² John xiv., xv., xvi., xvii.

³ When we estimate the attitude of the mysticism of the Protestant Church toward the 'principle of theological knowledge,' we have to make due account of a difference between pantheistic sects and orthodox mystics similar to that difference which comes so prominently to view before the Reformation. The opposite tendencies of religious 'feeling' survived the disruption of the 16th century and the Thirty Years' War, and, like distinguishable streams flowing in the same channel, have been moving onward through modern history.

During the 16th and 17th centuries pantheistic fanaticism appeared in the Zwickau prophets and in such thoughtful, contemplative men as Theophrastus Paracelsus († 1541), Valentin Weigel (1533-1588), and Jacob Boehme. Swedenborg of the 18th century, largely influenced by Boehme, represents a novel phase of the same unchurchly current.

Of the more sober and evangelical mystics, John Arndt (1555-1621), John Labadie (1610-1674), and the learned commentator, J. A. Bengel (1687-1752), are to be named as exponents, though neither may be taken as the criterion of judgment respecting the others. Philip J.

Mysticism, if consistent with its principle, cannot but assign a subordinate place to the authority of the Bible. With rationalism and Romanism it concurs in the denial that the written word is the only norm of faith and discipline. But from Romanism it differs in not subordinating the word to tradition, and from rationalism in not subordinating the word to the logical understanding. Mysticism holds the written word subordinate to an inner light, a light emanant, not from the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, by the agency of His Holy Spirit, but immediately from God Himself; and this light emanant from God is conditioned, not on faith in the Redeemer, not on the gifts of the Spirit

Spener (1635-1705), A. Hermann Francke and the school of pietism of which Spener was the controlling genius, became during the last century the organs of the evangelical tenets of mysticism in Germany; but soon after Spener's death pietism degenerated.

In our age Swedenborgianism, the Church of the New Jerusalem, continues to be the leading representative of the unorthodox and unevangelical current of medieval mysticism. The Hicksite Quakers and 'Spiritualism' are varying manifestations of the same sentimental type of religiousness.

The orthodox 'Friends,' founded by George Fox († 1691), have, as to belief and moral character, for about two centuries, especially since the time of William Penn († 1718), embodied the better elements of the mystics of the Protestant Church.

Yet both classes of mystics, as before the Reformation so in modern history, are characterized by undue emphasis put on 'religious feeling.' The internal word of the Spirit is either more authoritative than the letter of the written word, or coördinate with the letter. And even when the internal word is in theory held subordinate to the written word, there is nevertheless an undervaluation of the Bible in comparison with the experiences of the soul; the consequence is that the authority of God addressing us through the letter of His word is not supreme and final. According to the New Testament Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ having the force of perpetual obligation on His disciples; yet the orthodox Friends as well as the Hicksites, in obedience to an 'inward light,' substitute for the actual observance of the Sacraments the delights of silent spiritual contemplation.

bestowed by the Redeemer glorified, but on spiritual vision. The mystic, abstracted from finite and fragmentary things, returns to the Author of his existence, and sinks into blissful sympathy with the essence of the Infinite and Eternal. If emphasis is put on the Spirit, it is the Spirit of *God*, not the Spirit sent from the Father by the incarnate Son on the day of Pentecost.

The principle that Jesus Christ the God-man is the only objective source of divine light involves not a denial of the mystical element in Christianity and in the experience of believers, but the denial of *mysticism*. In Holy Scripture and in Christian life, feeling, sympathy between divine Spirit and human spirit, performs a function of great significance. Profound spiritual feeling is as really indispensable to the theologian as logical thought. It is a marked attribute of the Gospel and the Epistles of St. John. But mysticism is to be broadly distinguished from the genuine mystical element of Christianity. The one characterizes the life and experience of the faithful Christian, and is in harmony with the truth that Christ glorified as taught by the written word is the only source of divine knowledge. The other is irreconcilable with 'the formal principle.' The written word does not contain it. Nowhere by evangelists or apostles is the doctrine taught that the vital relationship existing between man and God is of such sort that the soul by its act of self-reference back to God may after the example of Jesus Christ be illumined by rays of divine light beaming directly from the absolute Original. Instead, the unique characteristic of the New Testament is the fact that the Saviour of Man affirms *Himself* to be the complete and final revelation, even the self-manifestation of the absolute Light ; and that no one can obtain spiritual insight into God's essential nature but through communion with Him by faith.

§ 17.

These theories, Romanism, rationalism, mysticism, I have designedly pronounced *defective*, because neither is wholly false. Each affirms an element of truth, and the truth of each is conserved by the idea that Jesus Christ glorified, vitally connected in the Holy Spirit with the Church of all ages and by the written word, is the only objective source of theological knowledge.

1. There is, as Romanism maintains, a valid tradition. Christian truth lives in the Christian community, and passes with unbroken continuity from one generation of believers to another by spiritual sympathy and oral teaching. But valid tradition does not take its origin from certain private communications made to the disciples by our Lord, authoritative teachings which supplement the Christianity of the New Testament, or serve as a guide for its interpretation. Christian tradition begins with the beginning of the Christian religion. It runs parallel with epochs and stages in the history of our Lord and His kingdom. It attains its purest character with the birth of the Church by the advent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Thenceforward there is in the Christian community a spiritual mind, an intuitive perception, a consciousness of objective Christianity that in process of time obtains expression in creeds, in liturgies and in the organization and discipline of the Church.

Tradition is more or less pure according to the degree of spirituality, fidelity, and psychological capacities of the Christian community. But this consciousness, in as far as it is legitimate, grows from communion with Christ in the Spirit. It represents the same objective

fulness which Jesus of Nazareth and His apostles after Pentecost *proclaimed*; the same Christian truth which is given in permanent form in the written word, by chosen men, qualified by religious genius, by spiritual training and by a unique inbreathing from their glorified Lord.¹

Christian tradition antedates the oldest book of the New Testament; but tradition was formed, guided, purified and advanced by apostolic teaching. When the apostles were withdrawn, their knowledge of Christian truth and their authority as founders of the Church survived them in the inimitable records respecting Christ and His kingdom

¹ The whole compass of the meaning of tradition, says Dr. Schaff, we may take up "under the distinction of ritual, historical, and dogmatic tradition. To all these forms the general relation of Protestantism is such that it affirms their historical necessity, whilst at the same time it places them neither parallel with the Scriptures, nor over them, but under them only, and measures their value by the extent of their agreement with this standard."

Respecting formal dogmatic tradition, he says: "This is such as has not for its contents something different from what is contained in the Bible, but forms the channel by which these contents are conducted forward in history; the onward development thus of Church doctrine and Church life, as comprehended, first dogmatically, in the so-called rules of faith, above all in the Apostles' Creed, and then in the ecumenical creeds, that of Nice and the Athanasian; and still farther as orally carried forward, apart from all written statement, through the entire course of Church history, so that every one, before he wakes even to self-consciousness, is made involuntarily to feel its power. Tradition, in this sense, is absolutely indispensable. By its means we come first to the contents of the Bible, and from it these draw their life for us, perpetually fresh and new; in such way that Christ and His Apostles are made present, and speak to us directly, in the Spirit which breathes in the Bible and flows through the Church as her life's blood. This tradition, therefore, is not a part of the divine word separately from that which is written, but the contents of Scripture itself as apprehended and settled by the Church against heresies past and always new appearing; not an independent source of revelation, but the one fountain of the written word, only rolling itself forward in the stream of Church consciousness." *Principle of Protestantism*, pp. 82, 87.

which they had addressed to their fellow Christians. These records of Christian revelation became the norm of Christian faith and Christian teaching. They constituted then and they now constitute the 'formal principle,' as the Reformers called the Scriptures, by which the Holy Spirit is ever supplying, purifying and enriching the living current of Christian consciousness.

2. The human reason has a legitimate function in divine knowledge, especially in theological science. So far forth the claim of rationalism is valid. Christianity addresses the whole man, the intellect as truly as the will, the logical faculty as truly as the emotional nature. Revealed truth is rational no less than ethical. It is to be obeyed and *known* as well as by faith to be accepted. Reason has rights in the higher sphere of religion as in the lower sphere of natural science; and these rights can not be ignored nor violated without loss to the interests of the kingdom of truth.

But as the will is bound by moral law, so the reason is bound by rational law. It has an ordained sphere within which its demands and methods are legitimate. What is its office? Neither to construct the truth, nor to originate knowledge of Christian truth independently of the Revealer; nor is it the office of reason to constitute itself a supreme court, and summon for trial before its bar the substantive Truth which in Christian revelation confronts faith. The reason is but one essential member of the human soul; and it shares the abnormal attitude, the deficiencies and needs which afflict the manhood of man. All men have to be enlightened by Christian truth; and the light of truth authenticates itself to the eye of faith. When by the light of Christian truth reason is enlightened, it is her prerogative to appropriate truth in forms of con-

ception that satisfy her legitimate demands, and agreeably to an order of thought which the laws of reason prescribe.

3. Mysticism vindicates the office of religious feeling, and maintains the necessity of spiritual fellowship between the soul and God. So far forth mysticism stands for human rights and divine love. There is a direct and mystical communion created and sustained by the agency of the Holy Spirit, a communion which involves profound positive sympathy between the two terms, God and man. The Spirit Himself bears witness with the spirit of believers, that they are children of God.¹ To deny or overlook this mystical relation is a wrong done to the life of faith. And mysticism, in spite of its errors, did valuable service to the Roman Catholic Church of the middle ages, and valuable service through Spener,² Francke,³ Bengel⁴ and others to the Evangelical Church of the 17th and 18th century, by emphasizing the vital and experimental connection between God and believers, a connection more original than knowledge and richer than theological systems. But mysticism does not pause at this point. From emphasis put on spiritual fellowship it passes to a doctrine of revelation.

The life-giving and saving communion between the soul and God is not in the sense of mysticism immediate. Apart from the one Mediator, the notion of saving communion with God is an illusion.⁵ True communion is possible in Jesus Christ alone. His members have fellowship with Himself and in Him with His Father in heaven.

¹ Rom. viii. 16.

² 1705.

³ 1728.

⁴ 1752.

⁵ Not that direct answers to prayer or the joys of divine fellowship or our intuitions of God in Christ are an illusion, but the hypothesis that Christian intuition, or spiritual vision, or the contact of God with man in the ecstasies of feeling, may supplement supposed deficiencies of the written word, or rightfully contravene, when correctly interpreted, any of its teachings.

And with Himself this fellowship prevails, not principally by means of contemplation, but through the Holy Spirit.

With mysticism Christian theology affirms the fact and the necessity of an inward fellowship of the human spirit with the divine Spirit, and affirms such fellowship by way of opposition both to the Roman theory and to the pseudo-Protestant theory. But Christian theology must likewise assume an attitude of antagonism to the doctrine of new divine revelations as asserted by mysticism. No form of inward fellowship with God is Christian—and if not Christian it is not ideal—unless it prevails by virtue of faith in Jesus Christ as the true and only Mediator between God and man. The God-man becomes a source of divine knowledge when the believer sustains to Him the right relation by faith and love, not under any different conditions.

BOOK SECOND.

*THE CHRIST-IDEA, OR THE PRINCIPLE OF
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.*

CHAPTER I.

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL METHOD.

[18.

Christianity is the communion of love in Jesus Christ between God and man. Communion is reciprocal. In Christ God is active toward man in goodness and grace. In Christ man is active toward God by faith and the obedience of love. Two elements accordingly enter into the nature and history of religion, the divine and the human, or the life of God and the life of man. Each is an essential factor.

1. As Christian theology is the science of true religion, two factors also enter constructively into its organism and development: the idea of God and the idea of man. In a theological system either idea may prevail over the other. The idea of God may be asserted inconsistently with the autonomy and rights of manhood; or the idea concerning man may be asserted inconsistently with the majesty and absoluteness of the Godhead. Either truth if not logically conjoined with the other is unfolded into a false or defective theory of Christianity. Both alternatives are superseded when the two ideas become an organic unity, a unity in which neither is falsely subordinated, and each performs functions in harmony with the intrinsic demands of the other.

When in the history of Christian thought the idea of God prevails with undue force, this predominance emphasizes, not God as God, but His sovereignty, justice and power. Being the Creator and only sovereign, possessing supreme authority, He deals with transgressors, it is held, solely according to the sovereign counsel of His own will. Man by wilful transgression having fallen under condemnation, has forfeited all rights in presence of his Maker, who exercises absolute power over all His creatures.¹ Constructing a theological system from this point of view, God is falsely exalted above man, and man is relegated to a plane of existence unworthy of his divine imageship. From this defective conception of divine sovereignty is developed what may be termed the decretal system of theological science.

2. When the idea of *man* has prevailed with undue force, the false position assigned to him does not emphasize man as man, but it emphasizes chiefly man's will, his autonomy, his right to happiness. Man in effect becomes the arbiter of his own destiny. He chooses the service of God, or he renounces God, according to his own self-determination. Instead of governing the world according to his sovereign counsel, God is put virtually at man's disposal. Whether wisdom and power active in His moral government will eventuate in gain or loss, in blessing or a curse to men, turns on their own option.

Christianity is resolved into a species of humanitarianism. God is not Himself the highest good, nor is He, strictly

¹ "The reprobate are raised up for this purpose, that the glory of God may be displayed by their means." . . . "We can assign no reason why God grants mercy to His people, but because such is His pleasure; neither shall we find any other cause but His will for the reprobation of others." Calvin's Institutes, III, ch. xxii. 11.

speaking, man's ultimate end; the highest good for man is his own salvation. Redemption derives its value mainly from two things : its purpose to deliver mankind from the dominion of sin, and its wise adaptation to the accomplishment of this purpose. Man's will is thus falsely emphasized; divine authority is subordinate to human choice, and the divine government to human happiness. From this defective conception of the reciprocal relation between man and God is developed what is known as the Arminian system.¹

3. When these two fundamental ideas are held in relation to one another consistently with their intrinsic demands, when both are complementary members of an organism in germ, they become a principle of theological thought in which neither God nor man is either falsely exalted or falsely subordinated; a principle that embraces not God's sovereignty only, but God as God, or the wholeness of divine being, nor man's autonomy only, but man as man. There is not merely harmony of absolute authority with freedom of human will, but we have a unity in which the wholeness of the nature of man is in sympathy and fellowship with the wholeness of the nature of God. Each idea is complete, yet neither the absolute prerogatives of the Godhead nor the relative rights of manhood are invaded. From this unity of two fundamental ideas may be developed the Christological system of theology.

¹ Cf. Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i., pp. 517-519.

§ 19.

The decretal system begins with the sovereign will of God. God governs man and the universe according to an eternal unconditional decree. The decree is two-fold, negative and positive. A definite number of angels and men are chosen unto life eternal. All others are passed by. The Son of God becomes man and performs the work of redemption to the end that the elect may thereby be saved from condemnation. The incarnation becomes an expedient of divine wisdom; the chief purpose of Christianity is to effect reconciliation between the elect and God by divine agencies.

1. Historically, the decretal system originated with Augustine, the most eminent theologian of the 5th century. With him the doctrine of predestination and preterition was not a metaphysical principle, but an inference drawn from his conception of man's fall and of divine grace. The doctrine of Augustine was in the 9th century further developed and modified by Gottschalk.¹ He first taught the *predestinatio duplex*, or double predestination, an unconditional foreordination of a definite number of angels and men to life eternal, and unconditional foreordination of all others to everlasting misery. Gottschalk's theory of a double predestination was most completely and rigidly developed by the reformer John Calvin.

He says: "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which He has determined in Himself what He would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar tendency; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say he is predestinated either to life or to death."²

¹† 868.² Institutes, III, xxi. 5.

Through the commanding influence of Calvin, this metaphysical principle became the fundamental principle of Reformed theology in all countries which accepted the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's supper in distinction from the Lutheran.¹

The doctrine of predestination was not confined to the Reformed Church. Luther, a monk of the Augustinian order, accepted the conceptions of Augustine respecting God, grace and salvation; and his views exerted an influence over Lutheran divines and Lutheran theology as great as the system of Calvin exerted over the Reformed churches. Between Reformed and Lutheran theologians there was no issue on the doctrine of predestination according to God's sovereign will. A theoretic difference did indeed in one respect prevail. In the Lutheran Church predestination was commonly an inference, as with Augustine, from the idea of salvation by grace, rather than, as with Calvin, the primordial principle from which all other Christian doctrines were constructed.²

2. The unconditional decree may include the fall, or

¹ The theology of the Reformed Church of the Palatinate does not form an exception. True, the Christology of the Apostles' Creed has controlling force in the Heidelberg Catechism; hence the unconditional decree, and its necessary consequence, reprobation or preterition, are held in abeyance; though Olevianus represented the school of Calvin and Ursinus the more moderate school of Melancthon. But the theological lectures of Ursinus on the catechism did not develop the Christological genius of the creed. His Commentary proceeds throughout on the *à priori* metaphysical hypothesis of Calvin, and, compared with Olevianus, exerted the stronger influence in shaping the theological thought of the Palatinate. Cf. Ursinus Commentary on Heidelberg Catechism, translated by Williard.

² As Dr. Schaff expresses it: "Luther started from the *seruum arbitrium*, Zwingli from the idea of an all-ruling *Providentia*, Calvin from the timeless or eternal *decretum absolutum*." *Creeds of Christendom*, I, p. 451.

may exclude it. If included, then man apostatizes by transgression according to the eternal purpose of God. If excluded, the apostasy is not referable to the operation of God's decree, but referable to man's wilfulness. In both cases alike, however, the grace of God embraces the elect exclusively, whether angels or men. It is the good pleasure of His sovereign counsel to choose for Himself from the entire mass of fallen mankind a definite number of individuals, adults and infants ; and for them He has from eternity provided a Redeemer.¹

3. The Son of God assumes human nature in order that in this nature he may make atonement for the elect by suffering the penalty due to their sins. The merits of the sacrifice are unlimited ; they are sufficient for the whole world, for the non-elect as well as for the elect ; but the infinite merits of the sacrifice are restricted in their application to the elect only. Hence the system makes a distinction between the *efficiency* and *sufficiency* of the atonement. As the sovereign decree passes by multitudes of mankind, the virtue of the atonement, though sufficient for all, does not by the Holy Ghost work efficiently in the non-elect unto salvation.

4. As the unconditional decree rules in the conception of the incarnation and in the doctrine of the atonement, so it works constructively in all other theological conceptions. The gospel is in reality glad tidings only to the elect ; the call of God to repentance and faith, though resisted by the

¹ The Confession of Faith teaches, Chap. III.: III. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death."

IV. "These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

elect and non-elect with the same perverseness, is effectual in subduing the elect only; in relation to them grace is irresistible, but resistible in relation to all others. Only for the elect the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper have saving virtue. The true Church is an invisible spiritual community composed of the unconditionally elect who by the Holy Spirit are from the beginning to the end of time called forth from the mass of corruption among all nations. Heaven is the certain abode of blessedness for that limited number for whom Christ atoned, and in whom grace works efficiently. Their salvation in heaven glorifies God's infinite grace. Hell is the abode of the masses of mankind whom the unconditional decree has passed by. Suffering the penalties due their transgressions, their eternal damnation glorifies God's retributive justice.

5. A system of theology constructed on the basis of God's sovereign decree may be wrought out more or less logically, and may be applied to all departments of theology with greater or less rigor. There may accordingly be a moderate Calvinism in which the metaphysical doctrine of the unconditional decree remains in the background or is but partially developed. Nevertheless the fundamental hypothesis, if throughout logically applied, has the force of a principle in the construction of all the doctrines of the Christian religion.

§ 20.

In order, however, to do full justice to Calvinism, this system must be viewed in contrast with the theology of the middle ages. A comparison shows that Calvinism marks an epoch of progress on the doctrine of God, also as to the extent and certitude of personal salvation.

1. If we would estimate the positive significance of Calvin's theology and anthropology, his system must be studied, not chiefly in comparison with doctrinal results which have been developed since the 16th century, on the basis of original Calvinism, but in contrast with doctrines respecting God, the Mediator and personal salvation which were dominant during the middle ages, and continued to wield the sceptre onward to the dawn of the Reformation.

Calvin affirmed the majesty and holiness of God as explicitly as divine majesty and holiness were affirmed by medieval scholastics. But instead of putting God at an infinite distance from men, clothed with austere, repellant righteousness, not directly accessible to the prayers of His children ; instead of removing the Saviour from contact in the Spirit with sinners, and representing Him as approachable most effectually through the mediation of the Virgin Mary, of prophets, apostles and martyrs, Calvin with Luther and Zwingli brought prominently to view the immediate accessibility by the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ enthroned in glory, and the direct loving fellowship of God in His incarnate Son with believers.

Special stress Calvin laid on God as the God of *love*. The efficiency of saving love was indeed limited by sover-

eign will. Men "are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others."¹ Nevertheless it is *love* that elects. It is love to multitudes of mankind of all races and all nations, love to the unworthy and guilty, that becomes a dominant force in his doctrine of God, an ethical force that essentially modified the traditional conception of God's majesty and holiness prevalent in the Roman Church.

This doctrine of God's immediate communion of love with multitudes of elect men alienated by sin from divine righteousness was an extraordinary advance on the medieval dogma, a dogma which denied both the fact and the possibility of such direct fellowship with any men. The sanctity of divine majesty excluded, not only multitudes, but all from *direct* access. It is the assertion and vindication of electing *love*, that is, of free *grace*, bestowing the blessing of salvation and eternal life on sinners, not the limitation to a definite number, that was the new theological truth, new in contrast with Gottschalk, with all the scholastics, and in contrast with Augustine.

These ideas: the love of God to sinners, and God's direct fellowship in Christ with His people, have proven themselves to be imperishable factors of evangelical theology. Though important modifications have been developed in opposite directions, yet all evangelical theologies, Arminianism, modern Calvinism, the federal school, and the Christological school, have distinguishing features which are referable to the new truth concerning God's character declared by the reformers, declared with special emphasis by John Calvin.

¹Institutes, III, xxi. 5.

2. No less truly does Calvinism mark an epoch of progress as regards the doctrine respecting the certitude and extent of salvation. The comparison is to be made with medieval dogmas, not with Protestant beliefs of our time.

Pre-Reformation doctrines on personal salvation hung a menacing cloud of doubt over the Church. According to Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor Angelicus, a Christian cannot certainly know that he is a subject of saving grace, except by direct revelation from God; all other evidences being uncertain; but God very seldom makes use of direct revelation, and then only as a special favor.¹ To the teaching of Aquinas and the common sentiment of the Schoolmen the Council of Trent affixes its seal. Says this council: "Except by special revelation, it cannot be known whom God hath chosen unto Himself."² Doubts and fears relative to the future world were the common inheritance, not only of heretics and lawless men, but of the whole body of the faithful. With single exceptions, the immediate prospect of all who died in the communion of the Church was admission to the horrors of purgatory, where for unknown ages the souls of the departed had to suffer the agonies of expiation and purification in material fire.³

In opposition to the spiritual bondage of Roman dog-

¹ "Revelat Deus hoc aliquando aliquibus ex speciali privilegio." Summa, II, i. Qu. 112.

² "Nam, nisi ex speciali revelatione, sciri non potest, quos Deus sibi elegerit." Sixt. Sess., ch. xii.

³ "Respondeo: Dicendum, quod supposito ignis inferni non sit metaphoricè dictus, nec ignis imaginarius, sed verus ignis corporeus, oportet dicere quod anima ab igne corporeo poenas patietur; cum Dominus ignem illum diabolo et angelis ejus paratum esse dicat, Matt. 25, qui sunt incorporei, sicut ipsa anima. Sed quomodo pati possit, multipliciter assignatur." Ter. Par. Summae Theologicae Supplementum. Qu. 70.

mas, none among the reformers affirmed more definitely than Calvin, and none with greater force of logic supported the truth that believers enjoy in Jesus Christ a *present* salvation, and in Him possess the sure ground for the hope of triumph in the hour of death. The unconditional decree of election was the immovable foundation of an uplifting confidence for scores of thousands of all climes and in all ages—a multitude which no man can number.¹

3. Also regarding the salvation of infants Calvinism makes an epoch of progress. From the age of Augustine theology during all the centuries before the Reformation denied the hope of salvation to 'the little ones' dying without baptism. The entire infant world *extra ecclesiam* was consigned to the confines of perdition, *limbus puerorum*. "It may be correctly affirmed," Augustine says, "that such infants as quit the body without being baptized will be involved in the mildest condemnation of all. That person therefore greatly deceives both himself and others who teaches that they will not be involved in condemnation."² Elsewhere the same great teacher speaks in still stronger terms. The innumerable souls of those little ones, he says, who leave the body without being baptized, "are justly given over to eternal death by Him with whom there is no unrighteousness."³ From this tenet Calvinism dissents.

The decree of unconditional election as taught by Calvin includes, not a nation, nor a family, but *individuals*; and includes them not on the ground of nationality, or of parentage, or of innate disposition, or of personal worthiness, but solely on the ground of the good pleasure of God. Says Calvin: "If therefore we can assign no reason

¹ Rev. v. 11; vii. 9.

² De pecc. mer. c. 10. s. 1. c. 1.

³ Ep. clix. 2.

why He grants mercy to His people but because such is His pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but His will for the reprobation of others. For when God is said to harden or show mercy to whom He pleases, men are taught by this declaration to seek no cause beside His will.”¹

Harshly such words may sound in the ears of Christians now. But when at the beginning of the 16th century this doctrine was promulgated, it was an inestimable joy. The hope of salvation for infants dying in infancy was not only confirmed but also confidently enlarged. The sovereign decree elects unto life a definite number from among *all* nations, *all* classes, and every age. There is no cause for the inclusion of some and the exclusion of others ‘beside His will.’ True, eternal life is accorded only to *elect* infants; but the decree of election embraces multitudes.

Calvinism came laden with rich blessings of comfort, furnishing a firm basis for the belief that an innumerable company of ‘little ones’ born and dying in the darkness of heathenism, or quitting the body without baptism in Christian lands, instead of being ‘given over to eternal death,’ as traditional theology maintained, were the objects of Christ’s redeeming love, and would attain to the full fruition of the blessedness of glorified spirits.

4. The doctrine of predestination as held by the reformers, but most rigidly in all its consequences by Calvin, opens an era of peace for Christian experience, an era of freedom for Christian obedience, an era of joy for believers in death—of peace and freedom and joy which was unknown during the reign of Roman Catholicism.

When rightly compared with the theology and soteriology of pre-Reformation times, it must be conceded that the

¹ Institutes, III, ch. xxiii. 2.

Calvinism of John Calvin ennobled the idea of God, established on a firm basis the belief in the forgiveness of *all* sins,¹ and enriched the life of the Church by turning a service of fear and anxiety into a service of thankfulness and praise.

And these inestimable blessings of faith, love and hope have passed from Augustinian predestination, as inherited by Luther, as developed and advanced by Calvin, to all divergent theological systems of the modern Protestant world.

§ 21.

From the extreme rigor with which decretal Calvinism was asserted and applied, by Gomarus and his school, there was a reaction during the latter part of the 16th century, led by Arminius. Against the false predominance of the divine will he asserted the rights of man. Overlooking the important truth contained in Calvinism, and fixing contemplation chiefly on man's freedom, Arminius made the human will the starting point of theological thought, and in effect subordinated God to man.

I. The attitude of Arminius toward the decretal system was principally negative. He and his coadjutors, Episco-

¹Original sin and actual sins. The theology of the Schoolmen held that the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ on the cross atoned only for original sin, and for actual sins committed before baptism. The guilt of actual sins committed after baptism was remitted on the ground of the meritoriousness of works. So Anselm taught, Thomas Aquinas, and all leading theologians. Hence the prevailing sense of uncertainty as to personal salvation. The value of the atonement of Christ, Dorner says: "Ist daher nach beiden Confessionen (Reformed and Lutheran) allumfassend, *i. e.*, bezieht sich auf alle Sünden, die Erbsünde und die wirklichen, die Sünden nicht bloss vor, sondern auch nach der Taufe; während die Katholische Kirche die Kraft der Versöhnung auf die Erbsünde und auf die Sünden vor der Taufe beschränkt." *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, vol. II, p. 556.

pius, Limborch and Hugo Grotius, at all points denied what the decretal system affirmed, and affirmed what the decretal system denied. Arminius denied unconditional foreordination ; denied limited atonement, the doctrine of irresistible grace, of effectual calling and of final perseverance. Instead, he asserted the freedom of man. God has foreordained one unto final salvation and another unto final condemnation, according to His foreknowledge of the faith or unbelief of each individual. In effect Providence directs and shapes the events of history according to human preferences. Virtually man's free choice is the pivot on which the government of the world turns.¹

The principle of human freedom reigns in the construction of all Christian doctrines. Christ is in the same sense the Saviour of all. His atonement embraced all men without exception. Every individual is capable of accepting or rejecting saving grace. Every one may or may not persevere in faith and obedience to the end. Men are eternally saved or lost according to the manner in which they exercise freedom of choice.

In Arminianism the divine will is falsely subordinated to the human will. The principle has been developed and

¹ The first of the Five Arminian Articles says: "That God, by an eternal, unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ His Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake, and through Christ, those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this His Son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath, and to condemn them as alienated from Christ, according to the word of the Gospel in John iii. 36." A.D. 1610. Election and condemnation are thus conditioned by foreknowledge, and made dependent on the foreseen faith or unbelief of men. Schaff's *Creeeds of Christendom*, vol. I, p. 517, and vol. III, p. 545.

applied with more or less consistency. We may distinguish between extreme and moderate types. Moderate Arminianism appropriates some phases of Christian truth which belong to Calvinistic theology. All the logical consequences of the Arminian negative method of opposition to the unconditional decree do not therefore appear in every system of Arminianism. Moderate Calvinism and moderate Arminianism approach each other; they hold much Christian truth in common; each nevertheless has a key-note distinctively its own.

2. Calvinism assigns false predominance to the sovereignty of God's will, and overlooks the intrinsic necessities of man's ethical life. God works at will upon man and in him. Man is positively active in the process of personal salvation only in as far as he is acted upon by God. Repentance, faith, holy living and final perseverance are all divine effects. God as it were carries out the decree of election in the history of the elect in spite of any disposition or preference to the contrary. Willing or unwilling, they are to be saved from the dominion and penalties of sin. Unwillingness is overcome by irresistible grace.

Arminianism lays false stress on the freedom of 'the natural man.' Recognizing and asserting the necessities of his ethical life, it fails adequately to emphasize the prerogatives of God. Divine majesty is falsely subordinated to human will. Instead of God acting at will upon man unto salvation, it may be said that man at will acts upon God; that is to say: God governs the universe in the interest of man and according to man's self-determinations.

3. This representation of the two theologies is governed by the principle of each, logically applied. As actually wrought into system, neither Calvinism nor Arminianism acknowledges, except in rare instances, all legitimate con-

sequences. In preaching the gospel and in practical religion, Calvinism commonly accords a measure of freedom to the human will which is not consistent with the decree of unconditional foreordination; and Arminianism recognizes a kind of independence and sovereignty in God which is not consistent with the manner in which the autonomy of man is in theory asserted.

§ 22.

About the middle of the 17th century arose a theology which was intermediate between foreordination and free-will, known as the federal system. The central idea was neither God nor man, but a connection between man and God as brought about and perpetuated by the covenant. Proceeding from this standpoint a peculiar modification of Reformed theology was developed.

1. The first impulse to federal theology may have been given by Olevianus, who published a work on the Covenant of Grace.¹ But the idea of the covenants, taken as the central principle of a theological system, was wrought out first by Coccejus, professor at Leyden, 1648. He was followed by Francis Burmann, Abraham Heidanus, and Herman Witsius.

Coccejus began with the idea of *two* covenants. The first was the covenant of works entered into by God with Adam in his primeval state. Innocent and righteous, Adam was endowed with ability to render perfect obedience to God's will; as such he stood the head or representative of the human race. Proving unfaithful to his high trust, he fell under condemnation, and his posterity whom he represented participated in the same apostasy and the same
 ii. by
 lief on 1536-1587, *De substantia Fœderis gratuiti inter Deum et electos*.
 III, p. 57.

condemnation. The federal headship of Adam justifies the sentence of death which passed upon all men.

The other was the covenant of grace entered into between the Father and the Son in eternity. The Son undertakes two things: to suffer the penalty resting upon the race for the disobedience of the first man, their federal head, and to fulfill all the obligations of man to God. God the Father engages that upon fulfillment of these conditions by the Son, He will remit the penalties of transgression, and receive all transgressors who repent and accept Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son, into everlasting favor.

2. The covenant of grace is administered under a three-fold dispensation:

1. The Patriarchal dispensation, *ante legem*, which extended from Seth onward to the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. 2. The Mosaic dispensation, *sub lege*, extending from Moses to Christ, during which period Jehovah manifested Himself through the priesthood, sacrifices and rites of the ceremonial law. 3. The Christian dispensation, *post legem*, when God enters into fellowship with men in His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. These three dispensations are at bottom one, being but three methods in which the same covenant of grace is revealed and realized.

Federal theology seeks to hold God and man together in a covenant, by which God's love to man is manifested and the capacity of man for fellowship with God is assumed. The covenant idea may be so developed that man is not to the same extent as by the decretal system falsely subordinated to God. God does not administer grace by the unconditional exercise of His sovereign will. The federal idea may likewise be so developed that God is not falsely subordinated to man's will, as is done by the

Arminian system. Man's freedom may be asserted more consistently with the prerogatives of the Godhead. Nevertheless, the federal principle may be so developed as to be in full accord either with Calvinistic foreordination, or with the doctrine of conditional foreknowledge as held by the Arminian school.

3. The federal system does not rise above the notion of compact or external agreement entered into by two parties. The relation is not vital, but ethical and judicial. Indeed this conception of the covenant of grace in reality holds the will of God the Father and the will of God the Son asunder; and by consequence keeps apart God and man. The two parties are bound by agreement to do something each toward the other and in the interest of the other; but each is bound conditionally. God the Father is willing to remit the penalty of transgression, on condition that the Son fulfil the obligations which in the interest of transgressors He has freely assumed; otherwise transgressors must perish.

Though federalism did not find the true basis for the union of God and man, yet the system was an ennobling endeavor to supersede the one-sidedness of antagonizing theologies, Calvinism and Arminianism. Moreover, federalism evidences the force with which the idea of God and the idea of man work as essential factors in theological science.

§ 23.

Against both forms of theological one-sidedness, the false exaltation of God above man, and the false subordination of God's majesty and sovereignty to man's freedom, a strong reaction has set in toward a different fundamental principle of theology, the concrete union of the two essential factors. Reasoning in the light of a more scriptural conception of Christianity, it has come to be seen that neither God alone nor man alone, neither divine sovereignty nor human freedom, is the true point of departure. Both require full recognition, God in His paternal relation to man, and man in his filial relation to God. These conditions of a theology, at once more scriptural and more Christian, are met by the Christ-idea—the idea concerning the divine-human personality of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God.

1. From the Christ-idea is constructed the Christological method of theological science. In Jesus Christ God and man have become one, one personality, one life, one revelation, one history. Yet God incarnate does not cease to be truly God. He does not empty Himself of His infinitude and resolve infinite being into man's finite nature. Nor does man in the person of Jesus cease to be truly man. Humanity is not apotheosized, not transmuted, nor absorbed into Deity.

In the Christ-idea God asserts His essential nature as God, distinct and different from humanity, and maintains His prerogatives as creator, upholder and sovereign ruler. Jesus is in the proper sense the true God. For us men there is no true God but the One who addresses our faith in the person of the incarnate Son; Jesus Christ being the living presence and the self-manifestation of the Godhead. In His personal history, His redemptive work, and His

glorification, He declares the absolute sovereignty of absolute love, and asserts the inflexible authority of divine righteousness. The demands of the fundamental factor in theological science are met.

The intrinsic rights of humanity are also met. The Christ-idea asserts the manhood of man, distinct and different from the divine nature. A dependent creature, the subject of divine government, yet man as man, the reality, the integrity and relative autonomy of his being, are affirmed and conserved. The reality of man: for humanity is a permanent and self-perfecting factor both in the history of our Lord on earth and in His state of exaltation in heaven. The integrity of man: for soul and body with all their faculties and functions enter into the constitution of Jesus Christ, and by Him are perfected. The autonomy of man: for in the incarnate Son humanity is emancipated from the limitations of apostasy and attains to the ideal status of positive freedom.

2. The Christ-idea affirms the ideal relationship between God and man under its twofold aspect, God's relation to man and man's relation to God.

As related to man God is the author of his existence, the perennial source of his life, final authority for his will, the ground of redemption, and the ultimate end of free activity. God ordains man's destiny according to His sovereign will; but that sovereign will is immanent in normal human nature, and to that immanent will answers the exercise of absolute authority in the government of the world. Foreordination is the independent activity of divine freedom; but divine independent volition is one with the normal activity of man's will. No moment in the God-idea relative to man is eliminated or abridged.

As related to God man is His creation, His dependent

subject, and His obedient servant, but no less also His child and companion. Whilst God is the law-giver, and man is at all points and in all relations governed and bound by God's law, it is no less true also that man is formed for obedience and for the fellowship of love with God. Man's nature is most truly human and his will most perfectly free when, acknowledging God's absolute authority, he is active according to God's law. In the personal history of Jesus Christ divine authority and human freedom are a unity, being two distinct factors of one ethico-religious life. The Christ-idea affirms not only God as God, not only man as man, but likewise the reciprocal aptitude and fitness of human nature and divine nature, of the finite life of man and the infinite life of God.

3. Affirming the positive truth contained in the metaphysical hypothesis of Calvinism and the complementary truth contained in the Arminian doctrine of free will, the Christ-idea unites in itself both elements. At the same time it has what each system separately held has not. Thus the Christ-idea becomes the type and law of a theological system which is commensurate with the prerogatives of God and the necessities of man.

§ 24.

The nature and constructive force of the Christ-idea taken as the principle of Christian dogmatics, will be more specifically and completely unfolded in the sequel. What has thus far been said is designed to be a general statement of the Christological method in distinction from the metaphysical system resting upon the unconditional decree ; and from the contrary system of Arminius whose point of departure is the freedom of choice.

Arminianism and decretal Calvinism possess each a tone and character answering to the fundamental principle from which each system is wrought out ; the two systems being throughout, if logically constructed, as different as the opposite hypotheses with which they begin.

Christian dogmatics constructed from the standpoint of the Christ-idea cannot but vary from both. As the formation of Christian doctrines corresponds to the type of the fundamental truth, this variation from the older theologies, if the science be consistently developed, will be no less, and no greater, than the typical difference between them and the Christological principle.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE FOR THE CHRISTOLOGICAL METHOD.

§ 25.

The validity of the Christological principle for Christian dogmatics will appear from an examination of Holy Scripture. The numerous books of the Old Testament are one self-consistent production ; all derive their distinctive genius from the promise¹ respecting the seed of the woman, the serpent bruiser, who in process of time becomes the seed of Abraham in whom all nations are to be blessed.

The unique character of the books of the New Testament turns upon the fulfilment of pre-Christian types and

¹ Gen. iii. 15.

prophecies in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. The gospels draw a picture in outline of His earthly history ; the Acts of the Apostles represent the planting and growth of His Church ; while the epistles set forth the manifold truths which radiate from His Person and work.

He who is the ideal centre of the books of the pre-Christian economy is central in the religion which that economy established and maintained.

The Person who is central in the books written by the original representatives of the Christian economy is the living centre of the Christian religion.

The idea central in the religion of the chosen people and central in the religion founded by the Christ of God, must be central also in the scientific knowledge of this twofold revelation, this twofold Messianic history.

As the old economy anticipates the new economy, as the former is superseded and abolished by the latter, and as the new economy is the complement and perfection of its predecessor, it is not the Messianic hope animating the books of the Old Testament, but the fulfilment of this Messianic hope, the historical Jesus of Nazareth glorified, that is to be taken as the primordial truth of a Christian system of theology.

§ 26.

The Pentateuch, the historical books, the Psalms and Proverbs, also the greater and minor prophets, taken together constitute an historical unity, a unity which hinges on the hope of an extraordinary Man, a lineal descendant of Abraham, who is to be the author of extraordinary blessings to the people of Israel, and through this people to all nations.

I. The hope of the Messiah is clearly traceable in the pictorial representations of the primeval apostasy.

God's word of promise concerning the seed of the woman has been properly called the Protevangel. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."¹ Faith in Elohim as related by the Protevangel to the apostate primeval family became the point of divergence of a true and a false religious history. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts."² Abel and Seth were succeeded by a line of believers, possessing a definite religious and ethical character derived from the object of their faith, a character distinguishing the Sethic line from contemporaneous nations.

2. The deluge was the judgment of God sent upon apostate nations for their *unbelief* and consequent wickedness. Renouncing the communion of faith with God, of which Noah was the exponent, the masses of mankind, drawn away from God by their passions, had fallen a prey to idolatry, superstition and sensuality. The judicial consequence was destruction. Their extreme wickedness was the effect of unbelief ; and unbelief consisted in the rejection of the righteousness of the Sethic community, a righteousness animated by the vital forces of the promise concerning the seed of the woman.

3. After the deluge the spiritual virtue of the Protevangel lives in the lineal descendants of Shem. The nationalities of which Japhet and Ham were the progenitors are characterized, not by atheism, but by persistent aversion to the worship and service of God as continued and imperfectly realized by the Shemitic family. Of this wor-

¹ Gen. iii. 15.

² Heb. xi. 4.

ship and service the ripest fruit appears in the person of Abraham ; who by a new act of Messianic revelation was separated¹ from his nation in Chaldea and constituted the head of a unique people, raised up by divine providence to realize, develop and fulfil in their national history the Messianic principle. The vague promise concerning the seed of the woman now becomes the more definite promise concerning the seed of Abraham. A son, a perpetual lineage, an innumerable posterity, and a fertile land, were elements belonging to the covenant, a new communion announced by Jehovah and accepted by Abraham.

4. Of the promise made to Abraham Isaac was the first fulfilment, and therefore the personal type and warrant of a lineal descendant greater than he. Ishmael and the sons of Abraham by Keturah, developed their history principally on the plane of nature. Jacob and the twelve Patriarchs are distinguished from other tribes and nationalities by the fact that in them and in their descendants are perpetuated the vital forces of the Abrahamic covenant.

The immoralities of the chosen people do not contradict either the truth or the spiritualizing virtue of the covenant ; immoralities and vices reveal the strength of their natural perverseness and their inherited instincts for idolatry, which by the divine educational influence of the covenant were in process of being neutralized and overcome.

5. Of the seed of Abraham another typical representative is Moses. By leading forth the Israelities from the

¹ Not by an arbitrary act of the will of Jehovah ; but Abraham was elected and separated for the reason that he had become spiritually and morally fitted to be the organ of advancing revelation, and the founder of the 'holy nation.' He had 'an ear to hear.'

bondage of Egypt, by giving them the decalogue and the ceremonial law, he advances them to a higher plane of social life, of spiritual knowledge and religious organization. The Mosaic covenant produced the tabernacle, the ark, a peculiar priesthood and a significant ritual, more worthy of God and man than the cults of surrounding tribes and nations. The body of the people under the tuition and discipline of the ceremonial economy, though morally (when contrasted with an ideal Christian community) very low and religiously infantile and crude, became a more mature theocratic community. The moral law and the ceremonial law both pre-suppose the Jehovah-fellowship introduced by the covenant with Abraham. Both also typify more definitely the genius and character of the Messianic kingdom.

The ceremonial law is to be regarded as a development of the Messianic forces immanent in the covenant; both the covenant and the ceremonial law are a manifestation of two factors, divine agency and human agency, latent in the original seed-idea.

6. The history of the chosen people during their journeyings in the wilderness and from the conquest of the promised land onward to the age of Samuel and David, is a long period of transition from bondage in Egypt and from the tutelage of Moses to the status of theocratic manhood. The moral disorders, the outbreaks of anarchy, the desolations of wars under the Judges and Kings declare, not the weakness, but the strength of the Messianic principle. Delivered from Egyptian bondage, advanced to national independence and blessed with an abundance of good things, the natural man, getting stimulus from these great earthly advantages, joined issue fiercely with the higher covenant life, and contested the claim to supremacy.

Whilst among all other nations, idolatry, superstition and gross vices gained an easy victory over Monotheism and all the nobler instincts of the human spirit, here among the chosen people we observe a different ethical process and a different issue. The law of sin in the flesh was met with firm, persistent and growing resistance by the law of covenant life. From a deluge of moral and social corruption the people as represented by an inner circle, a 'remnant,' the true Israel,¹ came forth ultimately, under the culture of the heavenly genius of the covenant, upon a plane of faith, hope and worship higher than the plane on which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had stood.

7. Samuel is a turning point in the history of the covenant people. By his theocratic intervention David becomes king, and all the tribes are united in a mighty kingdom under him and his son Solomon. More definitely and prominently than ever before is the promise concerning the mission of the 'seed' of Abraham fulfilled in the son of Jesse. More definitely and clearly than ever before is also the truth brought to light that the seed is One greater than either Moses or David. The noblest representative of the coming seed, David becomes the noblest type of the final fulfilment of the Messianic promise. Henceforth the 'seed' of Abraham gives place to the richer hope concerning the Son of David, the Prince of peace, the Servant of the Lord, the Desire of all nations.

8. Pre-Christian history is pre-Christian revelation. Pre-Christian revelation embraces consecutively the lives of all the representative men and women of the elect people. Beginning with Abel, including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, the Judges, Samuel, David, Isaiah, the

¹ Rom. ii. 28, 29.

Messianic principle runs through a long line of faithful ones onward to John the Baptist, all of whom are animated, some in less others in greater measure, by a spirit growing forth, under the training of Jehovah's grace, from the unique genius of the Protevangel. Hebrew Monotheism, the Mosaic economy, the schools of the prophets and the Davidian dynasty are so many different stages in a divine-human history whose characteristics are developed from the indestructible vitality latent in the Messianic idea. This idea is the key to a right understanding of all the events recorded in the books of the Old Testament.

§ 27.

I have purposely made only cursory reference to the sacred literature of the Abrahamic nation. As regards the question before us that literature is important, but chiefly for the objective history of the covenant people which it reflects. The serious questions now discussed by biblical criticism, though involving matters of grave importance, do not lessen the force of the argument drawn from the history of the Abrahamic nation; nor will its force be neutralized by any future decisions of sound biblical scholarship.

The questions of biblical criticism pertain chiefly to the authorship, structure, editorship and date of the Old Testament *books*. Can the traditional theory be sustained by the evidence of facts addressing us from the words and style of the books? or must tradition yield to a different conception based on a more scientific philology and a more thorough knowledge of the books as they now lie before our eyes? This is the main question. It is not whether the objective course of Hebrew national history as por-

trayed by this sacred literature be true or false. That objective history is equally trustworthy, whether the traditional theory as to authorship and the time of writing stands or falls.

If the traditional theory falls, it is not truth, not objective reality, that succumbs; it is a human theory only. The series of extraordinary events, the belief in the one God, the promise concerning the seed, the fact of the Abrahamic covenant; the teaching concerning Jehovah's attributes and government, concerning righteousness and the Messianic kingdom; all the peculiar characteristics and hopes which distinguish the chosen people, as well as the types, foreshadowings and prophecies concerning the coming prophet, the Son of David, the righteous Branch, remain. We shall have to change our opinion of the manner in which the knowledge of Jehovah's revelation and dealings was handed down through a long succession of generations, but not our belief in the reality of the promise, and of the covenant, and of Messianic revelation. It will be necessary, moreover, to dismiss some ancient opinions respecting the men by whom, and the manner in which, the sacred books were written, but not necessary to renounce confidence in the inspiration of the authors, or the trustworthiness of the books.

On either presumption, the Messianic principle is the fountain-head of the stream of pre-Christian history as described by the books of the Old Testament; and we may with equal clearness discern the steady growth and fuller development of this principle through the successive periods of Hebrew history onward to its close. The unique spiritual dignity of the volume, the unaccountable contrast between Hebrew literature and the sacred literature of all other nations, also the singular correlation at all

points between the books of the Old Testament and the books of the New Testament; these things are the same whether the entire Pentateuch came from the hand of Moses, or many parts of it were indited by some unknown inspired authors. Nor does the distinctive genius of the Pentateuch become more or less worthy of God whether we discover in it the marks of one or several editors.

§ 28.

The same unity characterizes the Scriptures of the New Testament, but with this difference, that the unity is of a higher order. Here not types and prophecies of the Messiah address us, but the actual personal history of Jesus, the Son of Man, who is the consummation of the unity which underlies and governs pre-Christian history. The gospels mirror His historical life on earth; the Acts describe the miraculous beginning of His Church; the epistles embody three types of apostolic apprehension of Christian truth; and the Apocalypse announces the conflicts and triumphs of the kingdom He has founded. Under these manifold aspects one theme, and but one, is set forth in its fulness.

1. The synoptists have sketched a picture of the external or earthly history of our Lord. Matthew and Luke begin with the annunciation, His genealogy, His forerunner, and the wonderful events connected with His birth; whilst Mark opens with the preaching of the forerunner, and the baptism of Jesus. From His baptism onward the three evangelists deal with the events of the same personal history,—His parables, miracles, His deeds of mercy, His faultless character, His conflicts with enemies, and His persecutions. All describe His betrayal and capture, His mock trial, His condemnation and execution, His resur-

rection, and Mark and Luke his ascension. Every chapter, every verse deals exclusively with this one extraordinary Person. Jesus of Nazareth is the beginning, the middle and the end of the synoptic gospels.

2. The Gospel by John sounds the same key-note. Whilst the synoptists portray the earthly side of the life and character of our Lord, John has written, as he himself expresses it, that men might know and believe that Jesus is the Son of God.¹ Beginning, not with His birth of the Virgin Mary, but with the pre-mundane existence of the Logos, and affirming that all things were made by Him, he announces his theme: the mystery of all mysteries, that the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, manifesting His glory as the only begotten of the Father.² Events in the history of the Son of Man are selected, parables and miracles are recorded throughout the entire gospel with the single purpose of declaring the truth of His divine-human personality. Everywhere, however, not the human nature only but especially the divine nature of our Lord comes into the foreground. He declares Himself to be the light of the world. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

3. Whilst the gospels set forth the personal history of Jesus Christ, the Acts relate the founding of His Church, her conflicts with the Jews, and her progress by the preaching of Jesus and the resurrection among various nationalities of the Roman empire. Jesus crucified, risen from the dead, ascended to heaven, is the single theme of Peter among the Jews and of Paul among the Gentiles. His person and life impart unity and consistency to the preaching, the sufferings, the persecutions of the apostles and their co-workers.

¹ John xx. 31.

² John i. 14.

4. The epistles are throughout written on the basis of the same general truth. The principle announced by Peter before the Sanhedrin, that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,¹ is the great doctrine declared by Paul, and supported by argument in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. Salvation from sin by faith in Jesus Christ, is everywhere his grand theme.

The Epistle to the Colossians was addressed to the church of Colosse for the special purpose of showing and maintaining that in Jesus, the Christ of God, are hidden all the 'treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' The Epistle to the Ephesians is throughout intoned by a correlative purpose.

The entire argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews revolves on the same pivot. By His Son God made the worlds. The Son is appointed heir of all things. He is superior to angels, to Moses, and to the Aaronic priesthood. He is made a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek, without genealogy. The entire practical purpose of the argument of this epistle is that believing Hebrews may hold fast the profession of their faith in Jesus as the true Christ of God.

The other Epistles by Paul, Peter, John and James, whilst some are more doctrinal and others more practical, are identical in spirit and general design. The book of Revelation is prophetic of conflicts and victories of the kingdom of which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is pronounced to be the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

5. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament,

¹ Acts iv. 12.

written at different times and places by eight or nine persons, each for a specific purpose of its own, and independently of the rest, constitute a unity, a single volume, because all the authors speak and write, each in his own way, on one and the same theme, the person and work of Jesus, the Christ. An endless variety of topics is handled; the sovereign will of God, the freedom of man, creation and providence, the fall and sin, death and hell, God's authority and wrath, salvation, faith, good works, the resurrection, the second advent, the judgment and the glory of heaven; yet neither God's sovereign will nor man's freedom, nor any other truth, is the primordial idea of the writers. Paul teaches a doctrine on all these questions; but Peter, John and James do not. But whether the writers handle one or more of these momentous themes, in every instance the conception expressed regarding the theme is determined and shaped by the fundamental truth concerning the Christ. All events, past, present and future; all doctrines on God and man, heaven and hell, are related to Jesus the incarnate Son of God, as the branches are related to the vine, or the mustard tree is related to the mustard seed. It may be safely said that there is not a sentiment or thought expressed by any writer on any one of the innumerable questions concerning things in heaven and things on earth, concerning the past or the future, that does not derive its import from the person of the God-man. Events, doctrines and duties are distinctive because His personality, His history and His kingdom are unique.

6. If the Messianic principle underlies and permeates the entire history of pre-Christian revelation ; if this principle in the fulness of time became a concrete reality, fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth ; if Jesus, the Christ of God, be the one central truth of all the books of

the New Testament ; and if, without exception, all other truths are by evangelists and apostles presented in subordinate relations to Jesus Christ, from whom they derive their peculiar significance, then the force of the general argument drawn from Holy Scripture in support of the Christological idea as central in Christian dogmatics amounts to a demonstration.

CHAPTER III.

PARTICULAR ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE FOR THE CHRISTOLOGICAL METHOD.

§ 29.

The central significance of the Christ for Christianity is the pre-supposition of all the books of the New Testament ; and in all or nearly all there are passages which definitely express some one phase of the Christological principle. There are several books that were expressly written for the purpose of teaching the truth of the primordial dignity of our Lord. Such are the Gospel by John, the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Epistle to the Colossians, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the first Epistle of John, to which may be added the Apocalypse. All, however, are not equally animated and ruled by the doctrine concerning Christ. John's Gospel, Colossians, and Hebrews are to be named as principal sources from which the particular argument for the Christological method is to be drawn ; yet there are passages of equal Christological force in Ephesians, in First John, and Revelation. Besides, there are modes of teaching given by the synoptists, in the sermons of Peter re-

produced by Luke in the Acts, in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians and Philippians, and in the pastoral epistles, which are in entire harmony with and unequivocally support the strongest statements of the Christological books.

There is, moreover, a negative argument which contributes not a little to the force of the positive teaching of the New Testament. In all the books there is not a sentence which, when interpreted consistently with the logical demands of the context, either teaches a conception of Christ which contradicts the Christology of the Gospel by John or fails to be in full sympathy with it.

It is not proposed here to present the particular argument in all its details. The personal dignity of the Son will require special examination of Scripture teaching when we come to study the constitution of the Godhead. A still further inquiry into the doctrine taught by the New Testament writers will be necessary when we study Christology for its own sake. I shall now, therefore, confine the examination of Scripture teaching on the person of Christ chiefly to two of the Christological books, the Gospel by John and the Epistle to the Colossians. In addition, a few passages selected from books whose scope and purpose is not, in the more restricted sense, definitely Christological, will require some consideration.

§ 30.

As no writer is more explicit and pronounced than the Apostle John regarding the central significance of Jesus Christ, I shall begin with the consideration of several passages occurring in his gospel. Among these there is none more prominent and forcible than the prologue, John i. 1-18. To appreciate the full meaning of the prologue, in its bearing on the question now in hand, it is necessary to study it thoroughly in the original text. For our purpose, however, it may suffice to note a few characteristic features.

1. The Logos is God. Not God in any secondary sense ; the Logos is God in the divine or primordial sense. He existed in the beginning, *ἐν ἀρχῇ*. *Ἀρχή* may denote the beginning of all beginnings, or the absolute beginning, the original ground of all things other than God ; that is, of all created things. Or *ἀρχή* may be taken, agreeably to the more common interpretation, to denote absolutely the original point of time when in fact 'all things' began, implying that the Logos existed when no 'things' existed. Under either view the Logos is declared to be both pre-existent and pre-mundane. At a pre-temporal point of uncreated existence, when "all things" were not, the Logos was.

2. The Logos is the organ of creation. *Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν*. *Πάντα*, being without the article, is absolute. Not all things of a given class, nor all things of a given eon, but "all things" universally, *became* or obtained existence through the pre-mundane will of the Logos. He is thus of worlds, in time and space, the Author.¹ According to John the universe

¹ 'Through whom also He made the worlds.' Heb. iii. 2.

was not called into being by the fiat of God the Father ; its existence is referable to the will of the Father active through the Son. Evidently the doctrine is taught that the Logos is the necessary, self-acting organ through whom the worlds were formed.

3. After the worlds are brought into existence, the Logos is, and continues to be, the immanent law of impersonal things and of personal beings. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." The word *ζωή* denotes absolute life. It stands without the article. Life as *life* is in the Logos. The life of all orders of existence, in all realms, is of Him. He is the original fountain, uncreated, inexhaustible. From Him created life unceasingly comes. The life of angels, the life of men, the life of sub-human kingdoms, is ever by Him produced and sustained.

This 'life' which is of the Logos is 'the light of men.' Self-consciousness, the consciousness of God, and all valid knowledge of things, becomes possible by the sustenance and development of the 'life' of which the Logos is continuously the author. There is accordingly no true knowledge, either of impersonal things, or of created personality, or of God, but that of which the Logos immanent in creation is the ground and possibility.

4. The Logos, living in fellowship with God in the pre-mundane realm, the author of all worlds, the original fountain of life, the ground and possibility of knowledge *becomes flesh*.

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν.

The Word made flesh abode on earth among men, and "we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father." In other words : the Logos became man, and in Him, the God-man, shone forth pre-mundane glory, the divine life of absolute love in the person of the incar-

nate One. The pre-mundane glory manifested by the Logos become flesh, was the glory of the only begotten from the Father. 'Only begotten from the Father' affirms the metaphysical relation of the Logos to God, *ἐν ἀρχῇ*. Glory was the advent of grace and truth.

Interpreted according to the import of the words taken in their logical connection, and consistently with the scope of the Johannean gospel, the prologue plainly teaches that the incarnate Son is, on the one hand, the ground of all existence and of all life, and, on the other, the only perfect revelation of truth, in whom alone it is possible to know God.

§ 31.

The prologue closes with an unique passage which it may be well to consider briefly by itself. "No man hath seen God at any time, the **only** begotten Son of the Father, He hath declared Him," John i. 18. No one but the Son has led forth, or brought out, the Father into the field of human vision. The words have a positive and a negative import.

1. The passage has negative significance. Of all men it is denied that they have right knowledge of God. No one either with the eye of the body or with the eye of the soul has looked into God's nature. Though the existence of Deity is an object of perception to the human spirit, yet the character, life and the actual relations of God to nature, and especially to men, are hidden; and from 'the mind of the flesh' God remains hidden. The same inability is taught by St. Paul: "The natural man receiveth **not** the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: and he cannot know them, because they are spirit-

ually judged.”¹ It is impossible to see the things of the Spirit, because ‘the natural man’ has no spiritual eye.

2 The chief significance of the passage is positive. The only begotten Son has declared God. The original is *ἐξηγήσατο*, literally, has led out, or put forth. The Son incarnate, and He only, has led God forth, so that now in Him God may by the eye of the soul be seen. He who before was not seen, and could not be seen, is now by the Son so revealed that He may be seen and truly known by all men.

The Son does not reveal God, primarily, by speech or by teaching; but in the Son God Himself addresses men. The Son is in the bosom of the Father; and the Father is in the Son.² He who lived the true life of man among men on earth, is living the true life of God in heaven.

Godet says: “The true formula of the incarnation would be the following: The filial communion with God which the Logos realized before His incarnation in the glorious and permanent form of the divine life, He has realized in Jesus since His incarnation in the humble and progressive form of human existence.”³

This unbroken organic communion of uncreated life with created life, this personal union of the infinite Godhead with finite manhood, conditions the positive manifestation to men of the Father by the Son.

¹ I Cor. ii. 14.

² John xiv. 10; xvii. 21.

³ Comm. on Gospel of St. John, p. 296.

§ 32.

According to St. John, our Lord uses the following words of Himself, "No man hath ascended into heaven but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven," John iii. 13. Like John i. 18, this passage also has negative and positive meaning.

1. No one by the intuitive power of his spirit, or by any process of thought, has surmounted the ignorance and bondage of the human race, and penetrated into the divine glory. Heaven, the immediate realm of God's existence, is shut against natural human insight.

2. The only exception to universal exclusion from insight into heaven is the Son of Man. He has ascended into heaven inasmuch as He descended out of heaven. He who was with God before the worlds, and came down to earth in that He became man, also enters into heaven. Christian revelation of God is a movement that passes from above downward, from heaven toward earth, not a movement from below upward, from earth toward heaven. He who goes forth from the bosom of the Godhead, enters really into the organization of humanity and of the natural world. Then passing out of this lower earthly domain, he again returns to heaven, the realm of perfect communion with God.¹

He who having descended from heaven also ascends up to heaven is not God as God, but God in the person of the Son incarnate. The Christ of God, the Son of Man, alone asserts this prerogative. Whilst He is tabernacling in the flesh He at the very same instant is living in communion

¹ "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father."

with God. Sojourning on earth and living in actual connection with earthly things, He at the same moment is above the earth and maintains fellowship with heaven. In His personal history the adamantine wall of separation and contradiction between heaven and earth, between the spiritual world and the natural world, is in process of destruction. The Son of Man holds in His life the two opposite realms of existence, the created and the uncreated, in conjunction and harmony. Illumining the lower sphere from the centre of the higher, He became the true light of the world.¹

3. These two passages, John iii. 13 and John i. 18, are peculiar. Both deny in unequivocal terms that any man possesses, or of himself may attain to, the true knowledge of God ; thus setting aside and condemning contrary pretensions, whether of science or philosophy. When agnosticism asserts that the original ground of all things is unknown and unknowable, it simply confesses the ignorance which the Scriptures ascribe to unregenerate men universally.

Both passages also with equal explicitness affirm the self-manifestation of God in the person of the Christ. In Him God has become known ; in Him God is knowable. His person and His words are the revelation. Believers through this revelation may apprehend God. By implication, we are taught that those who do not learn to know God through the revelation made in the Son of Man, remain in the natural state of ignorance ; they do not truly know God at all. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’

¹The question concerning the genuineness of *ὁ ὢν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς* I do not overlook. The New Testament text by Wescott and Hort omits the clause. The revisers of our English version retain it; the preponderance of evidence being in favor of its genuineness.

§ 33.

Omitting other passages of equivalent significance, I pass on to consider the words of our Lord, as given by St. John xiv. 6-9: "Jesus saith unto Thomas, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh unto the Father but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him. . . He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Way, truth, and life are three modes or phases of one personal revelation. Jesus predicates all alike, not of His words, not of His commandments, not of His parables or miracles, but predicates them of Himself.

1. Jesus is the *Way*. He is the only medium of access to the Father. He is not only the One by whom the reconciliation of transgressors with the Father is brought about; but also the only medium absolutely of all actual approach of men to God, either by faith or by logical thought. Valid intuitive perception or scientific knowledge of the Father is not possible but through the incarnate Son. *Οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ.* The denial is unconditional and universal.

2. Jesus is the *Truth*. He is not one truth of a class, nor a single truth among many truths; the incarnate Son is the Truth as such. Nor is He the truth because He is the final teacher of truth, but the reverse; He is the teacher of truth because He himself is the Truth. Jesus is the truth in whom all truths stand; from Him all branches of truth in the created universe go forth, whether angelic, or human, or natural. Being the truth personally, Jesus addresses both the faith and the intelligence of men; He is adapted to man's religious and moral needs, but no less

also to the philosophical and logical demands of His rational life ; satisfying the profoundest and broadest aspirations after knowledge.

Himself the truth, Jesus determines the category to which all truth primarily belongs. Truth is being, ethical being, or normal personal existence. In the first instance truth is neither a correct affirmative, nor a correct negative. It does not belong to the sphere of abstractions, nor of propositions. Primarily truth is substantive, not notional. Jesus is the truth inasmuch as He is in the absolute sense the being that He ought to be,—the One whom the constitution of the Godhead and the divine idea of the universe anticipate. The being of all created existence stands in Him. Uncreated being and created being, the Godhead and humanity, are in Him united ; not identical, but *one*.

Jesus is the truth in a unique sense. He is not infinite truth in contradiction to finite truth ; nor finite in contradiction to infinite truth ; but He is both infinite truth and finite truth in living unity and progressive harmony. Hence Jesus is the ground and possibility of truth in the sphere of conception and thought. No man can attain to a sound doctrine of things divine or of things human but by virtue of the light shining forth from Himself. He is the key that opens the door to all avenues of sound knowledge.

3. Jesus is the *Life*. The original and unconditioned living One in union with the highest order of created spiritual life, the incarnate Son is the source of the vitality of all relative and conditioned existence. All things, whether in the sphere of the natural, or ethical or spiritual, exist for the reason that He wills each and all to exist, perpetually nourishes their vitality, and upholds their ex-

istence by the immanent activity of His word.¹ Hence He alone revives the dead ; He alone quickens the new life-communion between man and God, and re-establishes potential harmony between the creation and the Creator.

4. Way, Truth, Life, three modes of one divine-human personality, pre-suppose and anticipate each other. As Life He is the original and vivific ground of mundane vitality. Truth is the living personal ideal. He lives the divine-human life that fulfils the law of righteous love. Way is the living truth, the truth-life, the only medium whereby vitality is quickened and perfected in the human race.

This substantive trinality, Way, Truth, Life, is Jesus, the incarnate Son. Possessing the incarnate Son who is the Life, the Truth lives in us, and we live the Truth. Living the Truth, the Way possesses us, guides and sustains us, and we walk in the Way. Walking in the Way, we do the Truth ; doing the Truth, we realize, develop and manifest the Life.

5. According to the words of our Lord : " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," He identifies our knowledge of Himself with the true knowledge of the Father. The Father and He are objectively commensurate in such sense that the true idea of the Son involves the true idea of the Father. The order of perception and knowledge is from the former to the latter ; the seeing of the incarnate Son being the only condition of seeing the Father. The reverse order is impossible. Men are not required, nor have they the ability, first to know the Father, and then pass from the knowledge of the Father to the knowledge of the Son. The chosen disciples had no true knowledge

¹ Heb. i. 3.

of the Father, because they did not know the Son. If, as Jesus explicitly teaches, they had known Him, they would also have known the Father ; then Philip would not have said, Show us the Father.

It is deserving of special notice that Jesus does not reprove the disciples for not knowing the Father, but for not knowing Himself. The want of insight into the spiritual dignity of His own Person necessarily involved the absence of true knowledge of the Father. The turning point of the reproof administered to Philip is that though Philip had been with Jesus for perhaps three years, hearing His words and witnessing His deeds, yet after all Philip had not discerned the central revelation that the Father was in Jesus, the Son of Man, and Jesus in the Father. Otherwise Philip would not have said, Show us the Father. The reproof unequivocally implies that there is no adequate showing of the Father, no adequate revelation of God, other than the Son of Man. He whose spiritual eye discerns His divine-human dignity, in the very act also opens his eye upon the otherwise hidden life of God.

This entire passage¹ is unequivocal, explicit, directly pertinent to the question in hand. Studied in connection with John i. 1-18, and the whole tenor of John's Gospel, we are shut up to the doctrine that Jesus, the incarnate Son of the Father, is the only true revelation of the God-head. A valid doctrine of God hinges on a valid doctrine of the Christ ; from this standpoint all sound theological knowledge is to be developed.

¹ John xiv. 6-9.

§ 34.

The occasion of Paul's Epistle to the Colossians was chiefly the prevalence in the Church at Colosse of grave errors arising from a mixture of pagan theosophic speculation with the beliefs and traditions of Judaism. Stress was laid on fasting and on allowable articles of food to a degree that was incompatible with the redemptive work of Christ, and prejudicial to evangelical freedom. The point, however, from which especially dangerous heresies were developed was gnostic speculation concerning the transcendent world of spirits.

Among its practical effects were worship of angels, false mystic humility, and rigid bodily asceticism. This baneful mysticism involved a denial of the true divine dignity of Jesus Christ, the image of God. To Him a place was assigned above and among the highest orders of finite spirits, or eons, the emanations of the Godhead. The entire trend of theosophic speculation was incompatible with our Lord's pre-mundane existence, with His proper co-equality with God, with the all-sufficiency of His redeeming work, with the unity of mankind, and with the Christian conception concerning the new life-communion of believers with God in Christ by the Holy Spirit.

The prevalence of these metaphysical errors and anti-Christian practices furnishes the occasion of a letter in which with singular clearness and definiteness the apostle emphasizes the superiority of the nature of the Son to the highest ranks of spiritual beings of all worlds; the Son's essential co-equality with God; His unique headship in the realm of creation and of redemption; and His universal claim to confidence as possessing in Himself absolutely the fulness of all wisdom and knowledge. The consequence

is that this epistle, next to the productions of the Apostle John, is perhaps the most important book of the New Testament on the subject of Christology.

As exponents of the general tenor of the epistle, I refer to several passages occurring in the first and second chapters. Col. i. 12-20; i. 26, 27; Col. ii. 3; Col. ii. 7-10. The first passage is the most comprehensive and explicit, the full force of which is summed up in ii. 3 and ii. 9. I shall briefly consider the teaching of the apostle in these three places.

§ 35.

I begin with Chap. i. 16: "For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible; . . . all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Several facts are here definitely predicated of the Son.

1. The Son is pre-existent and pre-mundane. He existed before He became incarnate; He also existed before all things. *καὶ αὐτὸς ἔστι πρὸ πάντων.* The word *πάντα* stands without the article, and signifies the universal *all* of created things. Before the "beginning," when "God created the heavens and the earth," the Son was.

All things, the entire universe, were created *in* the Son. The original is: *ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα.* The meaning is not that all things were created by Him or through Him as the instrumental agency, the preposition being not *διὰ*; but that all things were created in Him, the Greek being *ἐν αὐτῷ*. The Son is the *archetype* after which the whole creation was fashioned.¹ Of Him all things

¹Cf. Meyer *in loco*,

are the types and exponents. The apostle is careful to particularize the manifold import of *τὰ πάντα*. In the Son were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers. Nothing exists in heaven or on earth, visible or invisible, of which the Son is not the author and the prototype. The language of Paul is equivalent to the words of John concerning the Logos; without Him was not anything made that hath been made.¹

The Son is both the prototype of all things and the *organ* of their creation. Not only were all things created *in* Him, but all things were likewise created *by* Him. *Τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ . . . ἔκτισται*. No organ of creation other than Himself was either employed or necessary. The apostle denies and sets aside the gnostic theory of a demiurge; at the same time he rules out and condemns the false postulate inherited from Plato, that matter, *ύλη*, is essentially evil. In teaching that the Son is the prototype and organ of all existences without exception, Paul abolishes Platonic dualism, and utterly destroys the philosophic basis of false asceticism.

Being the archetype and organ of the whole creation, the Son is also the ultimate *end*. All things were formed, and all things continue, *in* Him, *by* Him, *for* Him. *Τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται*. The words *καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν* express the purpose or final cause of all things. Of the whole creation the Son is both the crown and the author. He being originatively related to all worlds, all worlds perpetually stand in Him. *Καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν*. The power, the laws, connections and forces

¹ John i. 3.

by virtue of which the universe is upheld, by which from age to age its manifold forms of existence subsist and develop, by which it is moving onward toward its final consummation, continually proceed from the Son. Intermediate agencies that do not owe their existence and perpetuity to His will, or that do not directly or indirectly minister to the accomplishment of His purpose, are superseded.

2. The force of this doctrine concerning the pre-incarnate Son relatively to the universe, is gathered up by Paul and made to bear directly on the incarnate Son. He in whom, by whom, for whom all things were created, and in whom all things ever hold together, He, the incarnate Son, is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. In Himself all fulness absolutely, *πάν τὸ πλήρωμα*, dwells. The universal fulness of which Paul is speaking does not inhabit the pre-incarnate Son, but the incarnate Son. The author and upholder of all worlds becomes the author and head of the Church; and of the Church the author of all worlds becomes the head in that, having been made man, He suffers the death of the cross, and becomes the first-born from the dead. Having made peace through the blood of His cross, through Him all things are reconciled unto God, whether things upon earth or things in the heavens.

The primordial dignity and fundamental significance of the incarnate Son in relation to all departments of theological science could scarcely within such brief compass be declared more definitely and comprehensively even by the apostle himself.

§ 36.

The other formulas of Paul's doctrine given in Col. ii. 3 and Col. ii. 9 set forth the fulness, πλήρωμα, of Jesus Christ in His relation to man and to God. As regards men, Paul teaches that in Christ are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge (ii. 3); and in relation to God, that in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (ii. 9). These comprehensive formulas I shall consider in the reverse order.

1. Paul teaches that in Him, Jesus Christ, dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (ii. 9). Observe a climax in the doctrine of the apostle; and in the progress of the climax observe *three* stages: 1, *The Godhead*; 2, *the fulness* of the Godhead; and 3, *all* the fulness of the Godhead.

Ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς. This illimitable fulness, πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα, the fulness of the *Godhead*, inhabits Jesus Christ. Paul uses the strongest and most positive term, θεότης, corresponding to the Latin *Deitas*, not *θειότης*, the equivalent of the Latin *divinitas*. It is not a divine quality, not *God-like* nature, that is predicated of Christ, but the essence, the veritable being of God.¹ God's being resides or dwells in Him fixedly, κατοικεῖ, as a man inhabits a house, or as the soul has its abode in the body. Further, the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ 'bodily,' σωματικῶς; not figuratively, not in appearance, but dwells in Him really under the form of corporeal manhood. If 'all the fulness' resides in His manhood, then in the person of Christ, according to Paul, absolute Deity confronts faith on the

¹ Cf. Meyer's Comm. Col. ii. 9.

plane of actual humanity; and in order to obtain true knowledge of the Godhead, it becomes us to study the human Christ, the Son of Man, that is, this real presence and historical manifestation of the divine nature.

2. The other Scripture, though occurring earlier in the second chapter (v. 3.), acquires more logical force for our purpose by considering it after v. 9. "In whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden," ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶ πύρντις οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι. The pronoun whom, ᾧ, refers to 'the mystery of God,' even Christ, spoken of in the previous verse. Taking verses 2 and 3 together, Alford renders the original thus: "the mystery of God wherein are all the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Comp. Chap i. 27: "to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." If we examine these profound utterances in their connection, it becomes evident that 'the mystery' named in ch. ii. 2, is Jesus Christ, that is, Jesus Christ in us, and that Paul in v. 3 means to say, that in Christ the complete thesaurus of wisdom, σοφία, and of knowledge, γνώσις, which before had been hidden from all ages and all generations, is now present; and being present in the person of the incarnate Son, the perfection of wisdom and knowledge is brought within the horizon of human apprehension.

The words of the apostle are as strong and comprehensive as he was able to make them. The structure of his sentences betrays the sense of a boundless breadth and an unfathomable depth of truth which language fails adequately to set forth. The terms which he adopts, namely, *sophia* and *gnosis*, were the accepted technical terms of that age, and were used especially to designate the object

and end of metaphysical speculation. By common consent of the scientific and philosophical world, true wisdom and true knowledge were hidden. Wisdom was hidden from the popular mind, hidden moreover from the understanding of all men, excepting only a select number who were endowed with the gift of extraordinary spiritual vision, and were thereby raised far above the masses. But according to Paul, this final end of philosophy, this *sophia* and *gnosis*, to gain which the most highly gifted men carry on their profoundest investigations, this hidden treasure is at hand in the mystery of the gospel, Jesus Christ. Paul is not content simply to say that the treasury of 'wisdom' is in Christ; but he embraces all realms of truth. The whole of all truth hidden from the perception of the human understanding is present and manifested in Him. Christ possesses absolutely *all* treasures. No imaginable gem is to be sought or found anywhere else. The boundless domain and the infinite riches of *sophia* and *gnosis* confront men in this divine-human mystery.

Nor is there any reason to suppose that Paul used these terms either accidentally or without clear consciousness of their significance relative to the pretensions of philosophy. At the time when this epistle was written the hypotheses of mighty systems of metaphysical thought were firmly maintained by men of genius and culture in Asia Minor, and maintained, moreover, in conscious opposition to the claims of Christianity. Directly in the face of the antagonistic speculations of his age, Paul asserts that the very problem of wisdom which these proud systems seek in vain to solve, had through the grace of God been in reality solved by the concrete personality of the incarnate Son.

3. Closely connected with these broad and unequivocal

assertions we have the solemn warning of the apostle against the groundless pretensions of philosophy. He says: take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (ii. 8). This warning implies that the conception of God and of God's relations to the world, which men had formed by the light of nature and of natural reason, cannot be anything else than defective and misleading. If a conception of God be constructed after the tradition of men, after the rudiments, *στοιχεῖα*, of the world, that is, if we think of the Godhead according to the first principles of pagan wisdom handed down from Socrates, Plato and their disciples, we fall under the perverting influences of radical error. The truth of God is "after Christ." Truth is other than "the rudiments of the world." It transcends and supersedes "the tradition" of pagan philosophers.

§ 37.

From Paul I turn to a remarkable utterance of our Lord as recorded by St. Matt. xi. 27. This Scripture represents in grand proportions the same central truth, but under a different aspect. "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him."¹

1. The Greek text is stronger than our English version; and I shall be governed by it in the presentation of the doctrine taught concerning the Son.

¹ Parallel passage in Luke: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." Luke x. 22.

Παντα stands without the article. All things, without limitation, are delivered unto the Son by the Father. "All things were by the Father brought into connection with and subordination to the economy instituted by Christ."

Says our Lord, as recorded by John: "All things that the Father hath are mine."¹ In both places the import of *παντα* is absolute.

2. No one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither doth any know the Father save the Son. The word *knoweth*, *ἐπίγινώσκει*, must be taken intensively. In English there is no equivalent term. The word means to *know fully and completely, to possess perfect knowledge of*. The same form of the verb is used in both clauses. No man perfectly knows the Son but the Father. No man perfectly knows the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. The being of the Father and the being of the Son exist on the same spiritual plane. Each is commensurate to the other; both as object known and as subject knowing. The incarnate Son is an infinite mystery, whom the Father knows and no other. The Father is an infinite mystery, whom only the Son knows, and whom the Son only can reveal. The being of the Son and the being of the Father are the same. Therefore the Father's knowledge of the Son and the Son's knowledge of the Father are equal, and are exclusive.

3. The words *will reveal* in the Authorized Version express the original only partially. The Greek is: *καὶ ὃ ἐάν βουληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλυφαι*. In the authorized English the word *will* is an auxiliary, and *will reveal* is the future tense. But in the original we have two distinct verbs, and we may translate thus, as in the Revised Version:

¹ John xvi. 15; Cf. John iii. 35.

"and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." The word reveal, ἀποκαλύψαι, here signifies to *disclose*, *bring to light* or *make known*, not to lead forth.¹ The revelation of the Father by the Son turns on the will of the Son. It is not like the declaration of "the heavens,"² an unconscious and unfree display, but a progressive ethical activity.³

4. The comprehensive word πάντα, *all things*, is to be taken without restriction. It denotes the absolute fulness of the Father; fulness includes being, the Father's essential being, as well as His wisdom, grace and authority. The fulness of the Father is not for a purpose delegated to the incarnate Son, but belongs to the Son as His own proper possession. "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself."⁴ The Son like the Father is the fountain of life;⁵ the two are one,⁶ yet personally distinct. In making the Father known, the Son makes Himself known; in making Himself known, the Son makes known the Father. The Son as Son differs from the Father, but Father and Son are the same constitution.

¹ Cf. ἐξηγήσατο in John i. 18. ² Ps. xix. 1; Rom. i. 19, 20.

³ In the clause 'he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him,' the word 'willeth,' ἐὰν βούληται, does not imply arbitrary exercise of will, as though of two persons equally receptive to divine truth the manifestation of the Father were vouchsafed to the one and withheld from the other. Βούληται affirms the principle that revelation to individuals turns on the autonomy of the Son, and pre-supposes His authority as Lord. Revelation is not made merely through the existence of the Son on earth as the instrument of the Father, nor through the Son's agency as God's servant; but the revelation of the Son is ethical and judicial. On Matt. xi. 27, Dr. Schaff remarks that it contradicts the notion that the view of the Person of Christ presented in the fourth Gospel is different from that in the other Gospels.

⁴ John v. 26.

⁵ John i. 4.

⁶ John x. 30.

4. The incarnate Son alone is the Person, who like the Father, has life in Himself. He is the *only* one who can say : " All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine." ¹ Therefore the Son, to the exclusion of all things and of all persons, knows the Father as the Father is in Himself. Therefore also the Son alone can choose to disclose to men the nature and will of the Father ; and no man can know the Father but as he knows the Father in and through the Son. God is truly knowable only to those who respond to the ethical manifestation of God made by the Son. Otherwise the ethical being of the Godhead remains unknown and hidden ; and men grope in spiritual darkness.²

§ 38.

The select passages which I have briefly examined are but a few of the many explicit utterances of our Lord and His apostles respecting the substance, or central truth, of the kingdom of God. Cf. I Cor. iii. 11 ; Matt. xxi. 42 ; Matt. xxii. 42 ; Mark xii. 10 ; Luke xx. 17 ; Acts iv. 11 ; Eph. ii. 20 ; I Peter ii. 6, 7 ; Heb. i. 1-4 ; Heb. iii. 1 ; Phil. ii. 5-11 ; Rev. i. 11 ; Rev. xxi. 5, 6 ; Rev. xxii. 13. All these Scriptures pre-suppose and grow forth from the foundation article of the Christian religion, that Jesus, the God-man, is the beginning, middle and end of revelation and redemption. The essential nature of God and the perfection of manhood are immanent and manifest in His personal life and history.

¹ John xvi. 15.

² Isa. lx. 2.

CHAPTER IV.

IMPORT OF THE CHRIST-IDEA.

§ 39.

Agreeably to Holy Scripture the person of the incarnate Son, the revealer of God and the redeemer of man, holds the central position in the Christian religion. That position is assigned not to God nor to man, but to Him who unites both. God and man being a unity in Jesus Christ, the idea concerning the Christ becomes the central idea in Christian dogmatics, the science of the Christian religion. Accordingly I pass on to consider what is peculiar and distinctive in this idea, or the import of the Christological principle.

The Christ-idea is a unity, embracing three distinct elements. The one is *God*, or the idea concerning the immanent presence of God in the person of Jesus. The other is *man*, or the idea concerning the humanity which the Son of God assumed. According to the classic Scripture in the Gospel of John: *Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*, He, the incarnate Logos, is divine, and He is human.

The third element pre-supposes these two factors; it respects especially the question regarding their relation or unity. In what sense are God and man one in the person of Jesus Christ? In His person God after a unique manner is related to man; and man after a unique manner is related to God. What is the nature of the relation? This is the principal inquiry. It possesses primary and ruling significance, as for faith so also for Christian dogmatics.

That God exists is an intuition of mankind universally. That man exists in distinction from God is a self-evident fact, immediately given in our common consciousness. But the fundamental truth of Christianity, that in Jesus Christ God has become man and man is one with God, is not thus given. The constitution of our Lord's unique personality is not manifested in ordinary consciousness, nor is divine-human personality an object of ordinary intuitive perception.

Here I shall not inquire whether or not Jesus Christ, as represented by the books of the New Testament, is true God or true man. These points will hereafter be studied in their proper place. They involve questions which have in part been answered by the particular argument pursued in the previous chapter. As it is my purpose now chiefly to develop the import of the Christological principle, I shall proceed on the basis of the truth of the first two elements, and shall confine myself to an inquiry into the third and central element, namely, the relation which God and man, the divine nature and the human nature, sustain to each other in His personal history.

§ 40.

The Christ-idea meets both the positive and the negative demand of Christian consciousness. The union does no violence to either God or man ; it is effected agreeably to the nature of man and the nature of God. Otherwise Christ would not be 'the Truth.'

A dogmatic statement of the divine-human personality of Christ may proceed in two ways. Thought may begin with the divine nature and pass to the human. Then it may be said : Christ is the only begotten Son manifesting

the life of absolute love in the personal history of the ideal Man. Thought moves from the Creator to the creature.

Or we may begin with the human nature and pass to the divine. Then it may be said : Christ is the ideal Man, asserting and maturing the ideal perfection of manhood in union with the incarnate history of the only begotten Son. Thought moves from the creature to the Creator.

Under both forms of apprehension the divine and the human are distinct but inseparable. Though different, these two forms of statement alike involve at least four distinct phases of the mystery ; all phases enter with equal necessity into the Christological principle.

1. The relation between God and Man in the person of Jesus Christ is *internal* ; it is brought about, not by forces foreign either to the infinitude of the Creator or the finitude of the creature, but by virtue of an original affinity and sympathy between the finite personal creature and the infinite personal Creator ; there is adaptation of the nature of each to the nature of the other.

2. Being internal the relation is also vital or *organic*. The absolute life of God and the relative life of man become in Christ one personal life.

3. The organic relation involves *ethical* unity. The life of God is the life of absolute love. The normal life of man is a life of love in God. God's love to man and man's capacity of love toward God are essential conditions of the personal union of God and man in Christ.

4. The union of divine life of infinite love and of human life of finite love implies an *historical process*. The union has epochs and stages through which it passes according to laws of growth. It has a beginning, an onward progress, and a final consummation.

I pass on to consider more particularly the import of these four categories. The divine-human unity fulfilled by the person of our Lord is internal, and vital, and ethical, and historical.

§ 41.

The union is *internal*. The constitution of man being fashioned in the image of God, there exists a correlation between God as God and man as man. Humanity finds the complement of its nature in personal union with the Son of God; God complements the original creation of mankind by a new creation, in which by becoming man He fulfils the eternal counsel of the will of love.

1. The union is not external. It is not effected by the operation of a cause or the influence of an occasion other than the essential nature of God and the essential nature of man. It is not to be said that the incarnation was due to God's arbitrary choice, implying that God as God, or His essential nature was either passive or indifferent. Nor is it sufficient to say that inasmuch as the Adamic race has by transgression become sinful and guilty, the gracious purpose of redemption rendered the assumption of man into union with God a necessity. The necessary mystery, under these views of it, would be in reality accidental, and a means to an end other than itself. In either case, we presume the operation of outward forces, a force acting *upon* man's nature and *upon* God's nature, rather than the essential movement of the divine nature itself, and the normal tendencies of man's nature.

This notion of a union brought about by any cause or occasion other than the correlation of God and man, involves a kind of violence done to both. The incarnation

would be an after-thought, not the original end of the divine world-idea; it would postulate a relation between two natures in the person of Christ foreign both to the eternal constitution of the Godhead and to the created constitution of humanity.

2. Between the infinite essence of the Godhead and the finite being of mankind there is reciprocal fitness. The only begotten Son is the image of the invisible God. Man is the image of the only begotten Son. God in the person of the only begotten Son is thus the archetype of man; man in turn is the type, or living mirror, of God; and this living mirror is focalized in personality. Each exists for the other. God formed man to the end that God might fill man's nature with divine fulness. Zwingli says: "*Deus gaudet possideri.*" Formed in the divine image, human nature has positive spiritual capacities which no object can match but God Himself.¹

If we reason on the ground of such positive correlation, the axiom, *finitum non capax infiniti*, which for ages reigned in philosophy and Christology, must abdicate; and the consequent doctrine held by the scholastics, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and many others, continued in force by the reformers (with but few exceptions,) of the sixteenth century, and taught by Leibnitz and the Kantian school of philosophy, that the infinite and the finite are mutually exclusive, is dissolved. Instead we are required to hold that the infinite nature of God and the finite nature of man are in sympathy. *Finitum capax infiniti*. Divine nature and human nature meet in the person of Jesus by virtue of an eternal aptitude of God for personal union with man and an original aptitude of man for assumption into personal union with God.

¹ "Inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te." Augustine.

3. Since only God can satisfy the positive spiritual capacities of human nature, man has an original, an ever-continuous need of God's fulness. God is man's complement. If human nature were not assumed into organic union with God, the original idea of manhood would fail of final actualization. The constitution of finite personality would be radically deficient.

Further, the truth that there exists positive kinship between infinite Spirit and finite spirit, will likewise perfect our conception of God as Creator. In becoming the complement of man by assuming man's nature in the person of His Son, God completes His own workmanship. By this mystery He fulfils His eternal idea of the universe. God and man become a unity in Jesus by virtue of a law of reciprocal demand immanent in both, in God as Creator and in man as the crown of creation.

4. The incarnation does not become a fact of history either by an arbitrary act of divine will or in violation of the human constitution. Doubtless Christ comes according to the counsel of God's sovereign will, but that sovereign will is in perfect harmony with itself in all creative acts, from the beginning to the consummation of the cosmos. The first creative word forming cosmos anticipates man's creation in the image of God; and this crowning event of the first creation anticipates the new creation of humanity in the person of the incarnate Son.¹ The Christ realizes the final end of God in fashioning the first man Adam after His image according to the good pleasure of His sovereign counsel.

¹ A thought to which ante-Nicene Fathers give expression. Tertullian says that in the creation of the first man God had in view, *Imago Christi futuri*. Doubtless suggested by Paul, who says of Adam: ὁ ἐστὶ τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος. Rom. v. 14.

The disobedience and fall of the primeval family provokes God's wrath, and poisons, perverts, and debases man's nature. But whilst sin has changed the original communion of love between God and man into a relation of alienation, it has not touched the eternal aptitude of God for union with man, nor annihilated man's capacity for regeneration.

§ 42.

As the union of divine nature with human nature in the person of Jesus is not external, so neither is it mechanical. God is living spirit; man, created personality, is organized ethico-spiritual life. The union between God and man in the person of Jesus is organic union. It obtains conformably to the righteousness of divine life and the law of human life.

1. God and man are not composite parts of the Christ. Nor are they in juxtaposition. But Jesus is the God-man, the divine-human personal organism.

The union is not mechanical. A mechanism is composed of parts. The parts are constructed by human skill, then fitted each to each, conformably to some conception or plan. The plan is foreign to the substance or material out of which a machine is constructed. The parts are not members. They are not related to one another by a law immanent in themselves; they are held together and they work together because of their skilful juxtaposition. The force that binds all into one is not vital nor internal, but dead or non-vital, and external.

In no such sense are God and man in the person of Christ one. The two natures are not concurrent. The Cartesian theory of a *concursus* between the Creator and the creature, between spirit and matter, fails to suggest

the type and law of Christological thought. At best it can suggest only a dualistic connection. God and man are not conjoined nor held together by God's wisdom and power. Nor do they work together for some ulterior end conformably to God's architectonic skill. Under no aspect is a watch, for example, or any other mechanism, an analogue. A conception of the connection of the divine nature with the human nature in the person of Jesus, that is either governed or modified by the supposed analogy of a mechanism is necessarily both defective and false.

2. An organism is neither compounded of parts, nor does it consist of parts ; it is a unity in which the whole and the parts are alike original. The whole requires and affirms the parts ; the parts presume the whole. No parts, no whole ; no whole, no parts.

God and man in the person of Jesus are one organically. The Son of God has a pre-incarnate and an eternal existence, yet the Christ-idea implies that the beginning of the mysterious unity affects both natures. Jesus was not first formed a man, with whom the Son of God afterwards was conjoined. Nor was Jesus first the Son of God in the world, a theophany, who became in reality human by taking concrete humanity into conjunction with Himself. But the actual beginning of the incarnation was the conception of Jesus by the Holy Ghost, a conception which at the point of incipency presumes the vital unity of both factors. The personal One at the instant of conception was neither God as God, nor man as man, but a new creation, in which the life of Deity and the life of humanity, Spirit and spirit, became one twofold principle in embryo. The divine factor supposes and includes the dynamic presence of humanity ; the human supposes and includes the dynamic presence of Deity.

Hence we may affirm hypothetically : If the Christ in embryo be not truly human He is not truly divine ; and conversely, if the Christ in embryo be not truly divine He is not truly human. Otherwise the Christ-idea becomes irrational and fantastic.

3. In an organism the parts are both distinct and different; as in the human body, the ear and the hand. Each part performs a peculiar function, but no member is active independently of the other members. The eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee : nor again, the head to the feet; I have no need of you.¹ All the members stand in the same life; by it they are pervaded, vitalized and governed; but the hand cannot perform the functions of the eye, nor can the eye perform the functions of the hand. Each member has its own law; nevertheless one type of existence and one law reign in all the members. Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.²

To this vital oneness the connection between the divine and the human in Jesus is analogous. The divine nature is truly and unchangeably divine.³ The human nature is just as truly and unchangeably human. Each nature continues true to itself. Yet in the personal constitution of Jesus the divine does not exist independently of the human, nor the human independently of the divine. The two natures are distinct and different, but one, interdependent, and inseparable. The divine lives a divine life; the human lives a human life; nevertheless in the personality of Jesus there are not two complex lives. He is unique. As in the human body one principle evolves, vivifies and unifies all its members; or as in man's being one vital principle

¹ I Cor. xii. 21.² I Cor. xii. 26.

Heid. Cn. xxxv.

evolves alike soul and body, vivifying both, uniting both in one mysterious constitution; so also Christ.

The reciprocal connection between the human and the Divine in Him is developed from an embryonic beginning by a process of growth in which a unique principle of two-fold life asserts itself at every epoch in His history. At every epoch and through every stage of the incarnate process the divine-human principle is unfolding its infinite potential fulness, whilst at the same time the divine nature is active after the manner of the divine, and the human nature is active after the manner of the human, but neither is at any instant active externally to or independently of the other.

In the personal history of Jesus, the Son of God is living His divine life in organic union with true human nature, and the Son of Man is living His human life in organic union with true divine nature.

4. In an organism the principle is the dynamic centre of the whole, embracing all the parts. The difference of the parts being evolved from the principle, the parts are by the principle sustained each in its integrity. In turn, the difference of the parts from one another, and the peculiar functional activity of each member in its integrity, condition the normal development and the normal functions of the principle. The eye and the ear, the heart and the brain must each perform its own ideal function; otherwise the vital principle declines and will ultimately perish.

In like manner the unity of the incarnate Son conserves the integrity of each nature. Faith in the one divine-human personality implies that the human nature be humanly active and the divine nature be divinely active. There is no exchange of attributes or functions. In Jesus the man is not merged nor sunk into the infinitude of God;

nor is God, the Creator, confounded with the finitude and creatureship of man. Accordingly it is not to be said of the incarnate Son that God eats and drinks and sleeps; nor is it to be said of Him that man is omniscient and omnipotent. Just as we do not say of a human person that his soul walks, or his body thinks. The man thinks; the man walks. So in the person of the incarnate Son there is no confusion. Though the two natures are distinct, they are a vital unity. The one personality is wholly active in each nature at the same time. Whilst the divine nature is divinely active and the human nature is humanly active, the whole Christ, the God-man, is active in each and both.

It is Jesus Christ who eats after a human manner, and speaks in human words. It is Jesus Christ who has all authority in heaven and on earth. The same person who sleeps in the ship, commands the winds and the waves, and they obey. The same person who weeps at the tomb of Lazarus calls forth Lazarus from the region of the dead. Whilst weeping is a human attribute and the raising of the dead is a divine prerogative, yet it was not God who raised the dead, nor was it man who wept at the tomb; but it was the living Jesus, the God-man, this unique person, who weeping wrought the miracle. The tears of sympathy and the might of the death-conquering word were with equal propriety predicates of the same personal subject. Not that tears manifested only the sympathy of our Lord's human nature; nor that the resuscitation of Lazarus manifested only the real presence and energy of His divine nature. Human tears express the sympathy of the divine heart. The divine might which released Lazarus from the bonds of the grave had an adequate organ of efficient action in human will and human speech.

If we fail to affirm the integrity of each nature, or fail to affirm each nature consistently with the living unity of the incarnate Son, the unity itself vanishes. Organic unity implies that the human is ever truly human and the divine is ever truly divine, yet that both, being distinct and different, are continuously and inseparably members of one and the same personality, of one and the same personal activity.

5. The principle that the vital unity of the divine-human Christ implies the integrity of each nature, requires some further consideration.

The son of God incarnate is in the proper sense God, co-essential and co-equal with the Father. Says St. Paul: In whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, *πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος*; the word *θεότης* denoting not divine qualities, but Godhood, or God's essential being. The same thing is to be affirmed respecting His humanity. The human nature of Jesus was properly human, human according to its original idea. The manhood of Jesus was the unity of body, soul and spirit. In other words, His human nature was not impersonal. It was personal. The divine personality did not take the place of and exclude the human personality; but the Son of God assumed manhood in its wholeness. Human nature, as to its distinctive central essence, is spirit. A constitution that is not personal, either actually or potentially, is non-human.

From one phase of the solution of the Christological problem by the Council of Chalcedon the anthropological thought of our age is, or will be, constrained, we think, to dissent. According to this solution Jesus Christ is truly God, "complete as to His Godhead," and truly man, "complete as to His manhood," but His manhood is impersonal. A sound psychology, as now developed, has to hold

that the human soul¹ (*anima rationalis*) is itself, as to its essence personal or egoitic. *Ego* is not a peculiar mode of human existence, repellant toward every other *ego*, but the very heart of living spirit, capable of positive sympathy with God as Spirit. An impersonal human nature would lack the central moment of humanity.

Dissent from the Council of Chalcedon does not however imply that in Jesus there were two persons, or that there was a human *ego* and a divine *ego*, or a human will separated from a divine will, just as there was not in Him a human nature associated with or separated from the divine nature. The birth of Jesus was the real beginning, potentially, of a divine-human personality. Positive sympathy between man and God involves mysterious affinity between the absolute autonomy of the divine nature and the relative autonomy of the human nature, between divine being as uncreated Spirit and human being as created spirit; an affinity by virtue of which Spirit and spirit, God in the unity and wholeness of divine life and man in the unity and wholeness of human life become by a human birth potentially one personality, and by the process of normal development and growth become one Person.²

¹ The conception of personality as formulated by Boethius (470-524): "*Persona est animae rationalis individua substantia*," was regnant in the Nicene age, during the middle ages, and until recent times.

² Dr. Schaif, in his lucid History of the Council of Chalcedon, apparently vindicates all aspects of the Chalcedonian solution of the problem concerning the two natures in the person of Christ; the impersonality of the human nature of Christ being regarded as a necessary link in the orthodox doctrine of the one God-Man; but he adds: "The impersonality of Christ's human nature is not to be taken as absolute, but relative." Vol. III, p. 757. Later, in his history of the Monotheletic Controversy, he remarks that the orthodox doctrine of two wills in Christ "saved the integrity and completeness of Christ's humanity, by

6. The Christ is the subject of two classes of predicates. Of Him all the attributes and relations of divine being are predicable. It is legitimate to affirm that Jesus is the Creator and upholder of the universe. Of Him also the normal attributes and relations of human being are predicable. It is proper to affirm that Jesus was born, that He grew and waxed strong in spirit; and that He spoke the dialect of His age and people. Of Him also abnormal conditions and relations of our fallen race are predicable. It is scriptural to affirm that the incarnate Son was weary, that He was sorrowful, that He prayed in agony, that He died on the cross and was buried. Of these opposite classes of predicates the same Person is the subject. It is just as scriptural and logical to affirm that the Christ died as to affirm that the Christ was transfigured; in both propositions the name Jesus, or the title Christ, designates the same personal subject. He who was true God and true man in one person turned water into wine, and was condemned by Pontius Pilate; He who by a word cleansed ten lepers, wept over Jerusalem. He who walked on the turbulent sea, was nailed to the cross. The self-same *ego* is in all these propositions the one indivisible subject. *Ego* is the unity, the dynamic centre of personal *Spirit* and personal *spirit*.

asserting His human will," and then subjoins the following important concession:

"This benefit, however, was lost by the idea of the impersonality (anhypostasia) of the human nature of Christ, taught by John of Damascus in his standard exposition of the orthodox Christology. His object was to exclude the idea of a double personality. But it is impossible to separate reason and will from personality, or to assert the impersonality of Christ's humanity without running into docetism. The most which can be admitted is the enhypostasia, *i.e.*, the incorporation or inclusion of the human nature of Jesus in the one divine personality of the Logos. The Church has never officially committed itself to the doctrine of the impersonality."

But we may not transfer the attributes of either nature to the other. Of the divine nature we may not predicate human attributes ; nor of the human nature predicate divine attributes. We cannot do it either scripturally or logically, and for the reason that neither nature by itself is the Jesus, the personal subject. Speaking of the birth of our Lord, it is unchristological to affirm either that the Son of God as such was born, or that the Son of Man was born, implying that 'the holy thing' in the instant of conception and birth was not God. Speaking of the crucifixion, it is equally unchristological to affirm either that the man Jesus died, or that the God Jesus died. Such propositions may be admissible in poetic description, and sometimes in ordinary speech ; but judged from the standpoint of a sound Christology it is logically inaccurate to say either that Deity suffered and died, or that humanity suffered and died, or that Christ as to His humanity died. If by the use of either proposition it is designed to lay down a Christological doctrine, then each is false.

The best analogy is always the individual man. We can not transfer corporeal attributes to the soul, nor psychic attributes to the body. We have to assert all classes of human attributes, somatic and psychic, ethical and spiritual, of the self-same *ego*. *I walk ; I know ; I love ; I worship*. Worship, love, knowledge and walking are each and all truly and properly the predicates of the same person. So also is Christ. Veritable Deity and complete humanity constitute in the unique mystery of His divine-human life one personal organism.

But the organic unity logically disappears, if we abbreviate either the divine nature or the human nature, or ascribe divine attributes to the humanity or human attributes to the divinity, or if we refuse to predicate any

acts or attributes, whether human or divine, of the one dynamic centre, the divine-human *ego*. In the incarnate Son the Creator and the creature, the infinite and the finite, the heavenly and the earthly, meet. Opposition and diversity are resolved into oneness and harmony.

§ 43.

The organic as distinguished from the mechanical is a category of Christological thought of primary importance. But by itself it is inadequate.

Not the physical only, but the ethical also, enters into the idea of the incarnation. The love of God to man conditions the love of man to God. If God were not absolute love, if man were not created in the image of absolute love, there would not be in God the aptitude for life-communion with man.

Man occupies toward God a reciprocal attitude. The love of man to God conditions the manifestation of the love of God towards man. If man were not created in the image of love, there would not be in man either a necessity or a capacity for life-communion with God.

On the basis of vital affinity is developed ethical reciprocity. The organic union is perfected by ethical union. And the ethical union, like organic unity, involves a process.

In the personal history of the Christ the human nature is by the divine progressively appropriated, and the divine nature communicates its essential fulness to the human progressively, each in the degree that in His human nature He develops positive receptivity for the divine. As the receptivity of the human for the divine becomes greater, the mystery of His constitution advances to a higher stage of reality and perfection.

I. God is absolute Spirit. The nature of absolute spirit is love. God is love, eternal, immutable, absolute. The

object of love in the realm of uncreated glory is God Himself. In the sphere of time this object is man.

Love is reciprocal. God's love to man implies man's capacity of loving God. God's communion of love with man implies that man's capacity of loving God has become a positive responsive activity and a living habit. The positive activity of love toward God no less than the latent capacity conditions the progressive actualness of God's love.

In His only begotten Son God is infinite love toward man ; but the impartation of infinite love, or the appropriation of its fulness by man, is limited by man's ethical capacity. As this capacity grows, as it becomes more positive and advances toward maturity, man's love to God becomes more real ; and as man's love becomes more real, God imparts to humanity of His fulness in larger measure. In the degree that it is ethically possible for God in larger measure to impart to man His essential fulness, man also in larger measure receives and makes his own this essential fulness.

Love has its own sphere and its own conditions. The condition of love is love. The condition of progress in the union and perfection of love between God and man in the personal history of Jesus is man's progressive receptivity and God's progressive impartation. Each depends on the other. Continuous impartation of His essence from God to human nature and free appropriation by man of the divine nature, this constant ethical reciprocity enters fundamentally into the Christ-idea.

2. Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Jesus at His birth was the Son of God, was the Son of Man, was the divine-human One.¹ He was the new creation in reality, but in

¹ Luke i. 35.

its incipient period. The babe was really the beginning, the potential beginning, of the unique personality, and of the kingdom of heaven, as represented and taught by the New Testament. All the possibilities of revelation and redemption were enveloped in His infant life. But it was the mission of this child perfectly to actualize the vital and ethical possibilities of His miraculous conception. And to actualize this potential beginning involved the necessity of normal growth, physical, psychical and ethical. The unity of organization constituted in the womb of the virgin by God's overshadowing agency, had to become a psychical and especially an ethical unity. His childhood and youth, His manhood and ministry, His death, resurrection and glorification were epochs and periods in the ethical, no less than in the physical process through which Jesus passed. At every point the incarnation advances from one stage of realization to another, from a less perfect to a more perfect realization of the union of Deity with humanity, of humanity with Deity.

3. These epochs and stages of progress are *ethical*. The organic growth of Jesus becomes the process of a more complete self-conscious union of the divine life of infinite love with the human life of finite love. The reverse proposition expresses the correlative aspect of the same truth: organic growth becomes the process of a more complete union of the human life of finite love with divine life of infinite love. Each ethical activity conditions the other. The communicative action of divine infinitude to the human nature of Jesus conditions the receptive action of His humanity. But just as really does the receptive action of human finitude toward the divine nature of Jesus condition the increasing self-communication of His divine fulness.

Jesus loves the Father, and performs the Father's will

of love. By loving the Father He appropriates and actualizes in His humanity the Father's love in the person of His Son. As Jesus advances in the obedience of love to God, or, to use the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as the "Son learned obedience by the things which He suffered,"¹ the positive spiritual capacities of His human nature are developed and enlarged, and Jesus appropriates to Himself progressively more of the infinitude of the divine nature immanent in His constitution. In turn the finite nature of humanity is appropriated by divinity; for the incarnate Son possesses the humanity assumed into hypostatical union, as the adequate organ of divine presence and divine manifestation, in the degree that by self-action the ethico-spiritual being of His humanity acquires capability and fitness to be the organ of incarnation, that is, acquires such capability and fitness after a manner in complete harmony with the autonomy of the human will. By free reciprocal action and interaction the life of infinite love transforms, according to the law of normal human growth, the finite life of love into its own image, and fills manhood with the essential fulness of the Godhead.

Jesus learns obedience; He learns by long, painful discipline.² Jesus sanctifies Himself.³ Rising from a lower to a higher stage of divine-human love, He becomes qualified by the strength of infinite love, freely appropriated and actualized, to redeem the world by laying down His life and taking it again.⁴

A remote analogy we have in the person of the first Adam. Formed in the image of God, he was not only good and right, he was not only able to maintain himself in the communion of love with God, but in the unknown

¹ Heb. v. 8.

² John xvii. 19.

³ Heb. v. 7-9.

⁴ John x. 17, 18.

depths of his being there were also possibilities of ethical growth, of divine knowledge, and of transcendent exaltation, which it was his mission to develop and actualize. By virtue of his divine imageship he possessed godlike genius and a godlike destination ; a destination and a genius immanent and potential, which was to become reality by a life of conscious, free obedience to the will of his heavenly Father. A distinction is to be drawn between Adam constitutionally and Adam personally, or between his godlike nature and his actual character, or between what he was by the creative word and what he was to become by the normal action of his own will. So we distinguish between the divine-human constitution of Jesus and the normal ethical process by which in His personal history and His mediatorial work He actualized the unique infinite wealth of His divine-human constitution.

A similar analogy, though less fitting, we have in every distinguished genius, like Michael Angelo or Shakespeare. At birth a man of genius is potentially what he may afterwards become ; but whether he will ever in fact realize his extraordinary powers depends upon his will. He must make himself what by natural endowment he is designed to become.

4. Ethical unity does not identify the two factors of our Lord's personal life. Instead, the life-union of divine love and human love conserves each factor in its integrity. Life-union also perfects each according to its own truth. Love is an unfathomable mystery. Whilst it is the distinguishing characteristic of love that it imparts its boundless fulness to its object, it is no less a distinguishing characteristic of love that it asserts itself and maintains itself by such free self-communication ; nay more, by free self-communication love enriches itself. Giving does not im-

poverish.¹ Receiving without giving would not enrich. Jesus actualizes His divine Sonship and actualizes the realness of His humanity in the degree that the process of ethical oneness by ideal interaction advances toward glorification.

This process of ethical oneness presents two phases :
1. The divine nature asserts its infinitude in the personality of Jesus in the degree that the infinite life of love communicates itself to His humanity, transforming His humanity into more perfect godlikeness. 2. The human nature reveals its ideal finitude in His personality in the degree that the finite life of love fulfils the law of absolute love.

The process of ethical transformation of human nature into ideal oneness with the Son of God, is the process of positive self-assertion of distinctively true manhood. The distinctively divine and the distinctively human are equally affirmed by the organic unity and the ethical history of Jesus. The Christ-idea affirms both the personal indissoluble union and the perpetual generic difference between the infinite Creator and the finite creature.

¹ "Give, and it shall be given unto you." Luke vi. 38.

§ 44.

As the relation of the human nature to the divine nature in the person of Jesus Christ is vital and ethical, the Christ-idea implies that the incarnation, though real, was not complete at the birth of Jesus, but by process of development attained to its final stage of perfection at His glorification. In order rightly to apprehend the divine-human life of our Lord, we may not regard that life at any one point as a finished quantity, but must recognize it to be an organic unity passing through historical epochs and stages.

I. The life of Jesus on earth without doubt reveals an historical process. Born an infant, He became a boy, a youth, a man. He grew in stature; and He increased in wisdom.¹ Subsequent to His baptism, He discloses during His ministry corresponding epochs and stages. The temptation and victory in the wilderness follow His baptism, and precede His redemptive preaching and miraculous working. The transfiguration occurs near the close of the third year of His ministry, when He was qualified for, and in prospect of His impending agonies and execution; and when three of His disciples were fitted to be witnesses. The transfiguration anticipates Gethsemane and the cross. The resurrection is followed by an extraordinary interval of "forty days."² The interval conditions the ascension.

Each period pre-supposes the one preceding it. Each period prepares Jesus for the one following. There is no repetition; nor is any event either arbitrary or accidental.

¹ Luke ii. 40, 52; cf. i. 80. The words: "And the child grew and waxed strong," τὸ δὲ παιδίον ἠΰξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο, are applied both to John Baptist and to Jesus.

² Acts i. 3.

Surveying all the epochs and stages in their connection, His personal life is seen to be an historical whole of which His birth is the germinal beginning and His glorification the ripened fruit.

2. This historical process is to be predicated of the organic whole, of the one person, Jesus, the Christ of God, in whom the divine nature and the human nature are a unity. The entire Christ is historical. We may not say that the human nature alone developed itself agreeably to the laws of growth, the divine nature being meanwhile unaffected. Nor may we say that the idea of divine immutability contradicts human history. It is much better to dismiss *a priori* notions of God's attributes and construct a conception of divine immutability from the personal history of Jesus, who lived the life of God in the historical life of man. If there be affinity between God and man, between the infinite life of the Creator and the finite life of the personal creature, this affinity holds for humanity, not at one point of man's existence, not at one stage, nor under one given aspect only, but prevails for humanity at all points and under all its aspects. Is it not just as truly human to grow, and attain to perfection progressively, as it is to be born? The one is no more mysterious than the other. Indeed the growth of Jesus, the God-man, becomes logically both intelligible and normal, so soon as we grasp the whole truth that the first-born Son of the Virgin was at His *conception* and *birth* truly God no less than man.

The Christ-idea means not only that the Logos became flesh conformably with His own eternal nature, but that He became flesh also according to all the laws and normal processes of humanity. The Logos reveals not only His affinity for man, but reveals His essence, by imparting

Himself to man conformably to an historical process. The historical process is the normal order both of the real assumption of flesh, and of divine manifestation in flesh. So far from contradicting God's immutability, the successive epochs and stages in the personal history of Jesus reveal divine immutability on a higher plane of reality. Immutability is vital and ethical.

3. God is indeed the infinite being; but infinite being is not rigid fixedness. God's being is the life of infinite love. At this point we touch that which is deepest and distinctively essential in the Christian idea of God. Granting that the incarnate Son was an organic unity; granting that this unique organism was the life of infinite love in personal union with the life of finite love, then it becomes evident, as before represented, that the infinitude of the divine can impart its fulness to the human in proportion only to the growing capacity of the human. There is thus of necessity a process of divine self-assertion and of divine self-manifestation in the humanity of Jesus. Proper Deity was a reality in the history of Jesus from His infancy and birth; but to assume that the babe in the manger was the adequate organ of the divine essence, of God's love, of His wisdom and might, would both contradict the New Testament, and to Christian reason would be a monstrous thought. The assumption would suggest the babe Hercules in his couch strangling the great serpents. At His birth Deity in Jesus was an infinite potentiality, a fulness of divine being, which was gradually actualized, from point to point, in His life, in His will and consciousness. No less God metaphysically at His birth than at His glorification, yet at His glorification the process of ethical unification had become complete. That status of His personal history was reached when divine nature had imparted

the largest measure of its fulness to the human nature, and human nature had developed the highest spiritual capacity of appropriating the infinitude of God.

The incarnation is in no respect magical. The living, ethical activity of two factors enter into the Christ-idea. Jesus is in the Father, and the Father is in Jesus during His entire earthly history ; but Jesus realized divine-human unity in one degree and under one form during one period ; and in a higher degree and a more perfect form at an advanced stage of His mediatorship.

4. Accordingly the eye of faith does not discern the whole realization of the Christ-idea at any one point of Christ's personal history. Neither His victory over the threefold temptation of Satan, nor His three years' ministry ; neither His crucifixion nor His resurrection ; not even His entire life in the flesh from its beginning to its close, is a complete exhibition of the God-man. Faith must follow Him to the transcendent world, and contemplate the prophetic, and priestly and kingly activities of His divine-human mediatorship in the glory of the Father. That state of exaltation is the ultimate perfection of the incarnation, the actual beginning of which was the conception by the Holy Ghost. To form a Christological opinion answerable to the objective truth, faith must survey this unique life of divine-human love from its inception through all its advancing stages on earth, and with Jesus rise into the heavenly realm, taking in His glorified history as head over all things to the Church.

No legitimate comparison can be made with any object fixed in space. Jesus Christ cannot be represented by a painting or a statue. The crucifix misleads Christological thought. Objects in time are likewise inadequate, but serve a better purpose. The Christ-idea we may compare to the rhyth-

mic movement of an epic poem, or to the rendition of an oratorio. The Homeric idea runs through the twenty-four books of the Iliad. To estimate it we must follow its æsthetic progress through all its variations, from the opening of the epic to its conclusion. Handel's conception of Messiah is breathed into the entire composition. No one can rightly estimate its beauty unless he studies the author's great work in its totality. So also is Jesus Christ. The reality and wholeness of the incarnation resembles in this respect the unity and grandeur of the Iliad. The ineffable movement of the mystery from the birth of Jesus, embracing all its epochs and stages, onward to His glorification, onward to the impending second coming, this one sublime process of divine-human love alone is the revelation of the full import of the divine-human Christ.

§ 45.

The internal, the vital, the ethical and the historical are not successive categories of the Christ-idea; and do not express so many different epochs; they are complementary phases of the personal reality. The union of two natures in Christ is internal because vital, and vital because it is internal. Each embraces and requires the other. The union is ethical, because the vital is the vitality of freedom and love. Being ethical and vital, it is historical. The twofold personality must according to the law of ethical life either fulfil its idea by passing through the normal process of growth, or fail. The historical pre-supposes and embraces the ethical, the ethical pre-supposes and embraces the vital; and the vital necessarily includes the internal.

Only when these categories of rational faith enter in due proportion into the idea concerning the relation to

each other of humanity and Deity do we approach a sound doctrine concerning Christ's unique person. We therefore exclude from the doctrine the conception of a relation between the two natures which is external, or mechanical, or arbitrary and unethical, or unhistorical and magical. In the degree in which either of these incommensurate categories become formative forces of Christological thought, doctrine diverges into the by-paths of error.

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST THE REVEALER AND REDEEMER.

§ 46.

Jesus Christ in whom the divine nature and the human nature, God and man, have become internally, organically, ethically, and historically one person, is the revelation of God and of man. The revelation is the self-manifestation of God in the life and history of man, and the self-manifestation of man living his true life in union with God.

I. The revelation in the personal history of our Lord is twofold. True religion being the ideal communion between God and man, it implies a satisfying knowledge of both. The ignorance and error superinduced by transgression relate to the one no less than to the other. The light of nature and of natural reason, fails as much to teach the whole truth concerning man as it fails to teach the whole truth concerning God. Accordingly the Christological idea of both God and man, when contrasted with the

doctrines of pagan philosophy or the myths of ethnic religion, is new and distinctive.

2. The God-idea of natural intuition includes truths of fundamental and unchangeable worth ; truths, however, that are mingled with radical and poisonous errors. Pagan beliefs and pagan cults are the necessary natural basis for Christian revelation. But Christ by His personal history brings to light God under an aspect that is anti-pagan and supra-philosophical. The Father of Christ, the only begotten Son, is not primarily power, nor sovereignty, nor fate-like fixedness, nor abstract unity, but love. Love is His essence or being. His sovereign will, His wisdom and power, His holiness and righteousness, are qualities of love.

Love is all-powerful, all-wise, absolutely sovereign, omnipresent, omniscient and immutable. Contrasted with all mythologies and all pagan metaphysics, this is new truth ; and this new truth is not revealed primarily by teaching, but revealed by the person and personal history of our Lord, including the epochs of His life, and His mighty light-bearing deeds no less than His wonder-working words. The incarnate One is Himself the distinctive, final and absolute manifestation of the divine essence. "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."¹ The Christ-idea leaves no room for the controlling force of a conception of God other than that which is declared by His incarnate humiliation, His propitiatory sacrifice, and His exaltation.

3. The idea respecting man developed by the powers of natural reason as affirmed by materialistic science, by pagan philosophies and unchristological anthropologies, is when

¹ John xiv. 6, 9.

tested by the Christ-idea equally defective. Not only are man's origin and destiny unknown, but especially unknown are the original and distinctive possibilities both of his soul and body.

By the personal history of Jesus is brought to light the new truth that ideal manhood is superior to all natural evils, superior to moral evil, and to all the destructive forces of the natural world. We discern especially the otherwise unknown capacity of man for personal union with God. In Jesus, moreover, we see demonstrated the indestructible vitality of human life, and the capability of a spiritual transfiguration of man's entire constitution, including the body no less than the soul.

The miracles done by the Son of Mary,¹ His resurrection from the dead, and His session on the mediatorial throne in heaven, all manifest possibilities of manhood which were, until asserted and actualized by Him, latent and hidden. Whilst I do not imply that the divine nature was quiescent or inactive in our Lord's miraculous deeds or in His victory over death, I must deny that the activity of His divine nature was magical. His humanity had positive intrinsic capacities which qualified Jesus to be the adequate organ of divine love, and qualified Him to surmount

¹ The signs and wonders done by Jesus are to be referred, not to His divine nature abstractly considered, but no less to the unique endowments of humanity in Him sinless and regenerate. Admitting that the raising of Lazarus from the dead declares authority and power that is super-human and divine, yet the New Testament truth that the Son of God and the Son of Man became in Jesus an individual *ego*, a single personality, requires us to hold that the human Jesus had ideal natural capacities which fitted Him not to be merely the instrument, but to be the living organ of positive divine action, the organism possessing endowments answering to the transcendent will of God. His mighty deeds were as truly the product of His human will as of His divine will, but of neither putting forth energy separable from the other.

the realm of the dead. The historical Christ glorified is the highest revelation of manhood no less than the ultimate revelation of the Godhead ; and this revelation of the former is just as needful for sound anthropology as the other is for a valid theology. No conception concerning man can have regulative force for Christology or for Christian anthropology, but that which is developed from a faith-survey of the Son of Man ; much less can any pagan hypothesis or unchristological theory of human nature become the basis of an objection to the life of Jesus Christ as portrayed in the New Testament.

4. God and man are *in their connection* the subjects of Christian revelation. Neither is manifested separately.

The essential nature of God shines forth in His union with true manhood. Man is the most congenial organ for God's presence and manifestation. On the other hand, the essential nature of man shines forth in personal union with God. This vital and ethical union is the condition of a human manifestation answerable to the otherwise hidden and undeveloped dignity and teleology of man. The two revelations are not two, but one. God is manifest in man ; man is manifest in God. The truth of the first proposition conditions the second. Reciprocally, the truth of the second proposition conditions the first.

God's essential nature would not shine forth in Jesus if in Jesus man's nature were not created anew, and if thus the deeper original aptitudes and the true teleology of the first man Adam¹ were not actualized in the last Adam. In other words : If humanity in Jesus were not created

¹ "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual." I Cor. xv. 46. "It appears that nature has hid at the bottom of our hearts talents and abilities unknown to us." La Rochefoucauld.

anew, and if thus the divine aptitudes of humanity were not asserted and actualized, Jesus would not be the capable living organ for the absolute manifestation of the Godhead.

The converse is likewise to be asserted. If God in the person of His Son had not become man, the godlike prerogatives of human personality, before 'unknown to us,' would have continued to be unknown and unrealized. Only by the assumption of human life into divine life does it become possible for man to become the ideal Man, and develop self-consciousness answerable to the dignity of his divine imageship.

The denial of the final revelation of man in Jesus involves the denial of the absolute revelation of God.

§ 47.

Jesus Christ, in whom divine nature and human nature have become one personal life, is the reconciliation of God and man. The prevalence of sin provokes God's displeasure, and subjects the transgressor to the judgment of God's condemnation. Christ resolves the judgment of condemnation into grace, and transmutes the transgressor's antagonism into harmony and peace.

I. Jesus Christ lived His divine-human life organically connected with our apostate race, where the law of sin reigns and is ever perverting and falsifying human nature. The apostate race is part of a spiritual kingdom of moral evil. Embraced within its dominion, the race obeys a foreign hostile will, and by this foreign obedience antagonizes the authority of God. Jesus fulfilled His mission in the bosom of these hostile human and superhuman powers. He was in "this world," not externally, like a diamond hidden in a sand bank, but internally, like a seed planted in

the earth. Yet, though internally bound up with an organism of moral and physical evil, Jesus asserted, developed and matured a normal human-life. His normal life includes two moments; one negative, the other positive.

Under a negative view His divine-human life was normal in that it was sinless. A member of an apostate race, living day by day, hour by hour, in contact with the moral wrongs, the social vices and the religious corruptions of His times, He nevertheless in His childhood and youth, in His manhood and public ministry, realized by His personal history a pure, spotless, humanity. He kept Himself free from wrong, from error and from the stains of impurity. Though "made sin on our behalf," Jesus developed a pure human life. "He knew no sin."¹

Under a positive view, the divine-human life of Jesus was normal in that He actualized the ideal likeness of man to God. The divine image in which the primeval man was created became in His physical and ethical history a reality, the final reality. He fulfilled all righteousness. His righteousness was internal, not merely external; it was real and spiritual, not nominal and formal. Jesus loved God with all His heart; Jesus loved His neighbor as Himself.

In His history love was even more than positive love; love became grace. The grace of His love bears relation first to God. The sole and persistent purpose of His life was to do the will of His Father in heaven; yet "born under the law,"² He was continually bearing God's judg-

¹ II Cor. v. 21.

² Gal. iv. 4. Paul teaches that Jesus was born subject to violated law, that he might redeem them who through transgression were under this subjection. In accordance with the New Testament, the Heidelberg Catechism teaches: "That all the time He lived on earth, but especially at the end of His life, He bore, in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race." Q. 37; Cf. Q. 17.

ment of condemnation resting upon an apostate world. So also in His relation to men. He was not only loving, but more than loving; He was gracious. Those He loved were His enemies; He loved them unto death, freely laying down His life for their redemption. As a son and a citizen, as a member of the Jewish Church and the Founder of the true religion, in His relations to all classes of suffering men, to His friends and foes, to His faithful disciples, to the fallen Peter and the traitor Judas, to the Sanhedrin and the Roman empire, at His trial and on the cross; bearing the taunts of His revilers, bearing the wrath of God against sin; Jesus at all points, in every attitude, develops and perfectly realizes the divine ideal of human love and human righteousness.

2. All the contradictions of sin are thus by a concrete process neutralized and surmounted. No erratic impulses, no one-sidedness of temperament, no defects of judgment, no perverseness of will, no shortcomings in worship, are to be seen in Jesus. On the contrary, the physical and intellectual, the moral and spiritual faculties are active in normal equipoise. Always antagonistic and superior to moral evil, always completely fulfilling the divine law of love, the dissonance between the heavenly and the earthly, between the eternal and the temporal, between the spiritual world and the natural world, is by His sinless and righteous life superseded and transformed into positive harmony. In His person mankind is emancipated from sin, triumphant over death.

The reconciliation between God, who is wronged by wilful disobedience, and our apostate race, is in the divine-human life of Jesus an actual fact, a personal reality. Reconciliation is not to be seen in the single event of His crucifixion alone. That one offering for sin was a neces-

sary and a cardinal epoch. But the reconciliatory virtue of the cross comes from the crucified God-man. Without detracting an iota from the central significance of His atoning sacrifice, we have to see the atonement proper, both under its positive and negative aspects, not alone in the shedding of His blood, but in the humiliation, the perfect obedience, the continuous conflicts and sufferings which characterize His whole divine-human history, consummated by His unchangeable priesthood in heaven. The true high-priest after the order of Melchisedeck, the Christ, becomes the devoted victim and the altar of sacrifice. The reconciler is the reconciliation. The peace-maker is the true and abiding peace.

§ 48.

The Christ-idea affirms the union of redemptive activity and of revealing activity. These two forms of Christian truth move not on parallel lines, nor do they follow in succession ; each necessitates and involves the other. Of redemption Christological theology has to hold that the Revealer accomplishes the reconciliation by the manifestation of God in man, by the manifestation of man in union with God ; of revelation, that the Redeemer reveals God in man, man in God, by His work of reconciliation.

‘Reconciliation’ and ‘revelation’ are however not coördinate. The necessity of reconciliation is accidental ; it has arisen from the apostasy and guilt of man. ‘Revelation’ is not accidental. It has not been occasioned by man’s apostasy ; its ground is to be found in the ideal relation between God and man. The ideal relation implies that God is active in love toward man, and that man is responsively active toward God. Revelation, or life-communion, pre-supposes the perennial action between the personal

Creator and the personal creature of the original and fundamental law, by virtue of which each turns towards the other ; both seek a fellowship of love. The Christ, the incarnate Son, fulfils this profound original law; and in fulfilling it reconciliation is rendered necessary. Reconciliation pre-supposes life-communion ; life-communion anticipates reconciliation. The two necessities do not move on the same plane ; the one is an original necessity, grounded in the divine world-idea ; the other is a derivative necessity, brought about by the false self-assertion of created personality. The actual life-communion between God and man in Christ conditions the reconciliation which He accomplished by His redemptive work.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAW OF DOGMATIC THOUGHT.

§ 49.

This idea concerning the Christ in whom God and man are organically and ethically one, who reveals both God and man by His life and by His work of reconciliation, is the fundamental law of Christian doctrine. A valid mode of thinking respecting God and the universe, respecting Christ and the Christian economy, is to be governed, not by an *a priori* conception of God, nor by philosophical or scientific anthropology, nor yet by the latest scientific theory of the cosmos, but by the Christological principle.

I do not propose to anticipate the dogmatic treatment of the manifold topics which enter into a theological system. The formative force of the Christ-idea will be most

clearly seen and best understood in the development and structure of Christian doctrine as the different branches of spiritual truth claim consideration in logical order. Nevertheless, it is important to secure and firmly hold a Christological standpoint in regard to the principal departments. I shall therefore limit the discussion of the Christ-idea, taken as the fundamental law of theological science, to three general subjects: God, the Cosmos, and Jesus Christ.

§ 50.

The doctrine on God is to be developed, not from natural intuition, nor on the basis of any philosophical system, either of ancient or modern times, but on the basis of the idea respecting the God-man. Belief in Deity and theological conceptions do indeed antedate Christianity. The revelation of new truth by Christ pre-supposes natural consciousness of God. This consciousness is universal. Nevertheless, the Christian doctrine, or the conception of the divine nature which may stand as absolute truth, can be obtained only by reflection on God as manifested by Jesus of Nazareth.

i. The Christological idea of God pre-supposes the common belief in the divine existence, the *consensus gentium*; also the instinct of worship, and all the spiritual truths underlying and permeating ethnic religions. So also do all other distinctive elements of Christianity pre-suppose corresponding aptitudes in the life of pagan nations; and every Christian moral precept pre-supposes corresponding ethical propensities and habits in pagan ethical experience. But pagan beliefs, pagan instincts of worship, and pagan notions of right and wrong, in short, the ethical and religious consciousness of unregenerate man is not a source of the Christian knowledge of God, much less a guide or a

criterion of judgment. On the contrary, in the degree that the doctrine of God is limited, ruled or fashioned by any pagan or metaphysical hypothesis, the doctrine will itself be, not Christian, but pagan, or merely metaphysical.

2. The possible theological product of natural reason, both in pagan and Christian lands, is furnished by history. Whatever unchristological speculation can accomplish, has been done. The product we have in three leading systems of theological thought : pantheism, deism, dualism. Either God and the universe are identical ; or God and the universe are separate and mutually exclusive ; or God and the universe, spirit and matter, soul and body, are referred to two original antagonistic principles.

Each principle has been developed under manifold forms, but no positive hypothesis other than what is assumed by these three systems, is attainable by natural intuition or natural reflection ; a fact established by the religious and philosophical opinions of all ages. If philosophic thought reacts against all positive hypotheses, whether dualistic, or deistic or pantheistic, men are led captive by some form of materialistic atheism. And in as far as Christian theology has accepted pagan or philosophic postulates, the prevalent doctrine of God has, in some of its essential features, been contrary to the genius of Christianity.

3. Pre-supposing the native belief in God's existence and native instincts of worship, Christianity illumines the eye of the soul with the light of absolute truth. That absolute Truth is Jesus Christ. "I am the truth." Hidden from all ages, the divine Being is led forth into the field of clear vision by the only begotten Son incarnate.¹ The infinite God

¹ "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John i. 18.

Himself comes from the realm of the unknown into the realm of the finite and temporal, addressing spiritual perception in the Son of Man.

The Christian idea of God, as He addresses spiritual perception in the person and personal history of the Son of Man, must stand in Christian theology as the ultimate truth, to the exclusion of all hypotheses which are contrary to it or inconsistent with it. This idea concerning the Godhead is its own criterion, also its own justification; and it becomes the norm by which we may judge the relative worth of every pagan conception, and of all metaphysical theories.

4. In order to construct a doctrine of the Godhead answerable to the genius of Christianity, it is necessary to dismiss contrary or preconceived opinions which rest on metaphysical hypotheses or unchristological reflection. God's existence, the obligation of worship, the contradiction between right and wrong, the disorganization caused by moral evil and the necessity of deliverance, though fundamentals of religious and ethical wisdom,—that is, pre-suppositions involved in the natural religious life, and thus the indispensable basis both of Christian revelation and of sound theological doctrine,—are truths that must be transformed, correlated, purified, Christianized before they can enter constructively into the Christian conception of God. This process of correction, ennoblement and Christianization can proceed only from one point of observation, the truth shining in the Son of Man. No axiom of natural reason, no logical deductions from an *a priori* principle, may limit, restrain or criticise the independence of theological thought. Theological thought, on the contrary, when proceeding logically from the standpoint of the Christ-idea, is authorized and required to challenge all fundamen-

tal conceptions of God which contradict it or are incompatible with it.

5. In constructing a doctrine concerning the being and constitution of the Godhead it is logical to begin with the idea revealed by the incarnate Son. Christian logic is a process of thought answerable to a twofold constitution : the objective order of Christian truth, and the laws of our rational life.

In pagan theology logical thought begins with the natural intuition of Deity, and proceeds according to the dim light of nature and of intuitive perceptions, given in the apostate human soul. A system thus constructed moves on the plane, not 'of the Spirit,' but 'of the flesh' ; deriving inspiration and contents not from the Messianic kingdom, but from the kingdom of disorganized humanity.

In Christian theology logical thought begins with the intuition of faith-life—the intuition of rational life animated and governed by a radically different principle, faith in Jesus Christ ; it proceeds according to the clear light of divine revelation shining forth from the Person of Jesus Christ and the new consciousness of God begotten by the Holy Spirit in the regenerate soul. A theological system thus constructed moves on the plane, not 'of the flesh,' but 'of the Spirit,' deriving its inspiration and contents, not from the kingdoms of nature and native religious instincts, but from the Messianic kingdom and regenerate human life.

If Christ be in reality the true God, if God's essential nature has in Him become man, if Christ therefore be the perfectly revealed God, the absolute truth manifest in man and to man, then Jesus Christ is Himself the eternal, the absolute Truth. There is no perfect divine self-manifestation addressing Christian faith and Christian thought other

than Himself. If He be the Alpha, the First, the Beginning,¹ Christological thought cannot, without self-contradiction, begin with a God-idea other or more comprehensive and more authoritative, than the primordial divine truth confronting both natural intuition and divine faith in the person of the God-man.²

Proceeding on strictly Christian premises, fidelity requires us to reverse the position of the guns. A conception of the Christian religion constructed from a point of view other than that of the Christian religion itself is evidently illogical. So a Christian theology that begins with a God-idea other than that which God Himself declares by the person of His Son incarnate contravenes the primordial law of Christian theology. Such a theological system may be wrought out conformably to the logic of natural reason or metaphysical speculation; but it falls short of and violates Christian logic.

¹ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." Rev. xxi. 6, Cf. Rev. iii. 14, Col. i. 18.

² Says Dr. Dorner: "Das für das Christenthum Begründende scheint dem Christlichen voranzugehen, wie kann es selbst schon Christlich heißen? Die Antwort ist: Dann wird es diesen Namen tragen dürfen, wenn sich *erstens* nachweisen lässt, dass alle wahre Gotteserkenntniss, auch diejenige, welche die Basis und Begründung des Historisch-Christlichen enthält, aus demselben Princip stammt, das seine volle Offenbarung in Christus gefunden hat, nämlich in dem Logos, dessen absolute Offenbarung das Christenthum in dem fleischgewordenen Logos verkündigt: so dass das Christenthum alle religiöse Wahrheit *zu sich* rechnet, obwohl im Reiche dieser Wahrheit das Eine auch wieder das Begründende für das Andere ist; und wenn *andererseits* die Christliche Bestimmtheit des Gottesbegüßs, *i.e.*, Dasjenige in ihm, was erst durch das historische Christenthum in sein helles, sicheres Licht getreten ist, sich als dasjenige ausweist, wodurch alle natürliche, der sana ratio zugängliche Gotteslehre erst ihre Befestigung und Ergänzung, damit aber ihren Christlichen Charakter erhält." Dorner's Dogmatics, vol. I, § 14, 4.

§ 51.

Being the ideal man, and revealing mankind not only under religious aspects, but also in psychic and physical connections, the Christ has cosmic significance.

1. If according to the hypothesis of natural science we may concede that man is the highest product of evolutionary processes; or if we affirm only that man is the final development of the divine idea of the world in process of realization from the beginning of chaos, (no less than which Christological cosmology allows us to assert); and if Jesus, who is no less truly corporeal than psychic, be the perfection of mankind, then this unique Man is, in either case, the microcosm, the end and crown of all inorganic and organic forces of the lower kingdoms of nature. He reveals the final cause which from chaos onward has been active in producing and shaping the innumerable formations of the universe. The Christ-idea accordingly becomes the law for Christian thought concerning the cosmos.

Christ is the *end*, no less than the beginning. The end or final cause of the universe is its controlling motive, which works in all its kingdoms, in all its *genera* and species, shaping their development from within toward consummation. Darwin's theory concerning the evolution of man from the lower kingdoms, is, if theistically interpreted, scriptural and Christological; for man is in one respect the organic product of lower processes. But the postulate of Darwin is at fault. Nature *begins* logically in the *idea* of man, not in the protoplasm. Externally and historically, chaos or protoplasm is first; but not when nature is viewed ideally. In the dynamic process it is

man that is first ;¹ and because first, man is last. Theistic evolution is development in the material universe of the divine idea of man; for this reason the actual man, or the idea realized by the first Adam, is the final outcome of the first creation.

2. As lower organic forms prefigure higher organic forms, as the plant foreshadows the animal, as the animal is prophetic of man, so does the first Adam typify the last Adam. The first man on the natural plane typifies the Second Man on the spiritual plane.² The Second Man realizes the idea and purpose of the first,³ somewhat as the first man realizes the idea and purpose of all sub-human kingdoms. Accordingly the whole economy of the natural universe, organic and inorganic, reaches completion in Jesus, the Son of Man. Physically connected backward with all higher and lower forms of organization and of lifeless matter, the last Adam is the exponent as of manhood

¹ "There is no fact of experience more attested than this, that the climax or completion of an author's work is the earliest object in his thought. The climax of his work is the latest thing to be worked out in order of time, but for that very reason it is the first thing to be conceived in the mind of the author; it is that which prompts him to begin his work, and it is that which sustains him in the process of its continuance." Quoted from: *Can the Old Faith Live With the New?* p. 237.

² I Cor. xv. 46, 47; Eph. i. 9, 10; Rom. v. 14.

³ "Recapitulans autem universum hominem in se ab initio usque ad finem, recapitulavit et mortem ejus." Irenaeus.

"Irenaeus decidedly keeps in view the twofold aspect under which Christ may be considered, as both *completing* and *restoring* human nature. Both are expressed by the term *ἀνακεφαλαιώσις*, i. e., the repetition of that which formerly existed, renovation, restoration, the re-union of that which was separated. Christ is the sum of all that is human in its highest significance, both the sum total and the renovation of mankind, the new Adam. He frequently repeats the proposition that Christ became what *we* are, that *we* might be what *He* is." Hagenbach's *Doct. Hist.* § 64.

so also of the universal whole of things. He is the key that unlocks its otherwise hidden meaning.¹

3. Admitting these premises, it follows that the Christian doctrine of the cosmos is to be constructed, not chiefly on the basis of existing phenomena as classified by science, but from the point of view of the final microcosm. The facts of nature and all legitimate studies by scientists have value for Christian cosmology; but the theories concerning the origin, wisdom and purpose of creation suggested by external phenomena alone are inadequate. They can render no positive service. Christian cosmology appropriates all knowledge of nature, but the principle of enquiry and thought, is not a scientific hypothesis; it is the perfect realization of the physico-ethical idea immanent in the organism of nature through all the eons. That is "the Second Man." In Him nature is brought into harmonious connections with God. The Second Man reveals both the ideal origin of "all things" (*πάντα*) and their teleology.²

"Ja auch die Schöpfung der Natur hat schon eine wenn gleich vermittelte Beziehung auf den, welcher der Einheitspunkt im Universum sein wird. Im Gegensatz zur Naturfeindschaft, zum Hass gegen Kunst, Wissenschaft, Staat ist es für die Gesundheit christlicher Frömmigkeit wichtig, dessen gewisz zu sein, dasz die erste Schöpfung, wenn man von der Sünde absieht, mit ihren Lebensgesetzen dem christlichen Princip nicht fremd, sondern befreundet ist, Typus oder Vorbild seiner Erscheinung. . . Ein schon begonnenes Verhältnisz kommt in Christus zur Vollendung." *Dorner's Dogmatics*, vol. II, § 100, 3. The truth that the natural world is a prefiguration of the new creation is the foundation on which rests the teaching of our Lord by *parables*

²*Καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ᾠκιστάι.* Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 2, "appointed heir of all things," (*πάντων*).

§ 52.

The Christ-idea is especially the archetype of dogmatic thought concerning the personal history of our Lord at every epoch and in all its periods. The acts and phenomena of His earthly life, His death, resurrection and exaltation, His mediatorial functions at the right hand of the Father, and His second coming, are all to be studied from this standpoint, that in His personality God and man are vitally and ethically one.

1. This principle governs a valid conception of His birth. Not man as man was born of Mary, nor God as God; but Jesus was conceived and born, He who was God in man and man in union with God. He who lived the life of God and the life of man in indissoluble personal unity; *He* was born.

The birth of Jesus is an actual historical fact, including His Godhead as really as His humanity. Both are factors in the inception of the mystery. Both are active; both are also affected; but each factor, the human and the divine, is active, and is acted upon, according to its own nature.

2. On the same principle we have to think of the official activity of our Lord. In every position, in all His relations, He is truly divine, truly human; the divine nature is not active separately as divine, nor is the human nature active separately as human; neither nature manifests itself either externally to the other or concurrently with it; at every moment the divine is active in union with the human, and the human is active in union with the divine, the two natures being the living factors of one personal organism.

The parables and miracles of Christ, His temptations and suffering are the predicates, not of man as man, not of

God as God, but predicates of *Himself*. As He is not God only, nor man only, so neither is He man and God associated together; but He is the new creation in which God and man are members of indissoluble unity. Hence we predicate proper divine attributes and proper human attributes of the one *ego*, the one person of Christ, and of the one divine-human life.

§ 53

How this twofoldness may exist is a question which transcends the province of pure logical analysis.

Christian faith, however, is neither blind nor unreasonable. Though the common understanding cannot grasp the mystery and analyze it, Christology may nevertheless think rationally according to the law of faith. Moreover, the conceptions of faith may be sustained and shown to be rational by analogy.

The best analogy, one that has the double force of illustration and argument, may be drawn from human personality. The human *ego* is a dynamic centre, from which radiate manifold classes of powers and functions, corporeal, psychic and pneumatic. The *ego* asserts itself in all classes of functions, and in all simultaneously. Moreover, each class and all classes of functions presuppose the *ego*, and its universal determinative force.

1. Personality is a dynamic centre. Body and soul are two distinct realms. Both alike stand in *M*. Physical and intellectual, moral and spiritual instincts, intuitions, functions, taken singly and collectively, are the predicates of the *ego*. There is no separation, no confusion.

To see natural light and to think on light are totally different acts; both *I* put forth at the same time. Seeing with the bodily eye is not separated from thinking on light; nor is thinking confounded with seeing, nor is sight ab-

stituted for thought, nor is the one transmuted into the other. Yet seeing and thinking are not the functions of two different subjects active concurrently, but the different functions of the same subject. *I* see the light; *I* think on the light. Thought and sight differ as much as soul and body.

There is a similar unity of desire and will, and a similar opposition. Hunger differs from the volition to eat ; but it is *I* that desire to eat, and it is *I* that choose to eat. Appetite and volition are rooted in a single subject; yet volition and appetite may be directly contradictory. I may desire to eat an article of food which I choose not to eat ; and from pure choice I may eat food to which appetite is indifferent or averse. Choice may hold appetite in subjection; or appetite may paralyze and take captive the judgment. Whether in accord or in conflict, judgment, choice and desire are predicates of the same *ego*.

2. No one class of manifold human activities can properly be predicated of its own organ; not corporeal activities of the body, nor rational acts of the reason, nor ethical acts of the will. The eye does not see natural light. Appetite does not eat food. Reason does not think logically. Will does not put forth an act of volition.

Instead, choice and reason and appetite and sight, all derive their distinctively human character from the human principle. The desires, judgments and acts which we call physical, or rational, or ethical, are personal predicates. The body, the soul and the spirit; the eye and the ear; the understanding and the memory; the will and voluntary action, are the organs and functions of myself. It is *I* that see light in and through the bodily eye. It is *I* that know and reflect in and through the intellect. So also in regard to my moral life. It is *I* that choose or refuse, *I* that do

right and shun wrong in and through the power of the will.

Further, I may be active physically, intellectually morally and spiritually, all in the same instant, and each function of personality may prevail according to its peculiar law. Or in the same moment I may be positively active in one organ or function, and relatively inactive in others. I may think on an object which I do not see, or I may see an object on which I choose not to think. Yet *ego* is ever identical with itself, whether active in all organs and functions, or active only in some, whilst the normal activity of others may for the time be in suspense. Personal unity involves different organs and functions; different functions and organs pre-suppose the same *ego*. This statement embraces facts of immediate self-consciousness; yet to the question how *ego* originates opposite activities, how *ego* maintains identity with itself in each and all, we can not give analytic answers nor express any answers in logical formulas.

3. This illustration may proceed a step further. As manifold organs and functions stand in one personal centre, so on the other hand is one personal centre dynamically related to all. I do not live apart from the complete organization of my whole existence. I can neither withdraw myself from my body and soul, nor can I be active after a normal manner independently of either. Whilst it is I, and I only that walk, remember, choose, yet I do these acts in and by my will, my memory, my body. *Ego* conditions these several organs and functions; in turn these functions and organs condition the *ego*. Not one organ only, but all organs, all functions, condition the legitimate and complete action of personality. I can not be active in a single function, or in a single direction, purely and

absolutely. There is no corporeal activity of a person that is exclusively corporeal; corporeal activity is at the same time also psychical. Conversely, there is no psychical activity that is exclusively psychical; psychical activity is at the same time also corporeal. True, one realm of my individual life may be in abeyance. When I am absorbed in study or in worship, the faculties of locomotion may be in suspense, but the suspense is only relative; the very powers that are in abeyance, condition and sustain for the time my adoration in worship or my progress in study. A similar relation to the human organism the soul sustains when the bodily functions predominate. The bravery and physical endurance of a soldier amid the terrors of the battle-field are supported by patriotism and by confidence in his general. Bodily powers and muscular exertion are predominant in a relative sense only.

The personality of man is a mysterious life-fact. It forbids the analysis of the dialectician. Here the scalpel of the understanding can do nothing, and has nothing to do. Yet all men admit the reality of the unanalyzed fact; nay, more. That the *ego* is such a dynamic centre, that personality and the manifold functions of body and soul are thus vitally related, all men spontaneously assume in consciousness and reflection. Consciously or unconsciously, every one always acts on the assumption that the inscrutable fact is actual, valid, necessary.

4. Human personality, the profoundest mystery on the plane of the natural creation, and divine-human personality, the dynamic centre of the new spiritual creation, are analogous. At first glance, the analogy may seem to be only remote. Human personality prevails in an economy that is natural, finite, transitory; the divine-human person of our Lord stands in the economy of grace, which is

supernatural, infinite, eternal. A little reflection, however, will show that the analogy is not remote.

Man as to his *essence* is *God-like*. Man is the transcript of the Logos,—the pattern in the mount of God after which the world-idea culminating in man, the microcosm, Jehovah's tabernacle, has at the foot of the mount been wrought into reality. Further; this living image of the Logos, man, has been taken up in his original integrity into union with God in the person of Jesus Christ; a mystery declaring the truth that human nature answers to divine nature. It follows that a true idea of man has anagogical force. It leads thought and knowledge upwards from the lower to the higher sphere, even into the secret recesses of the divine pavilion. An insight into the unique constitution of natural personality turns Christological thought away from the sandy desert of false philosophy, and guides it through the outer courts, through the dividing vail, bringing it into the very presence of the Shekinah. Hence if we think of the Word made flesh, the divine archetype, according to its human type, the created personal organism, we are not playing with empty shadows; instead we are dealing with the inner substance of this central mystery. No other avenue to the Holy of Holies is so trustworthy.

In the sphere of human life sight, hearing, thought and will, speech and worship are referred to my personal self, to *me*. So in the higher sphere of divine-human life, birth and growth, temptation and prayer, resurrection and ascension, headship and the second coming are all to be referred to the one *Me*. Further, as no human activities have truth or meaning in themselves separately from *me*, so neither have the parables, miracles or any events of our Lord's history truth or meaning when abstracted from the

divine-human *Me*, or when considered independently of Himself. No conception of any cardinal fact of Christian redemption, if the fact be taken by itself, can be valid. All the words and works of Christ, ordinary or extraordinary, are words and works in which the divine-human *Ego* lives, speaks and acts. Therefore all the conceptions formed of Him, and all speculations concerning Him, to be valid must be concrete. Reflection on His human nature may not exclude the divine. Reflection on His divine nature may not exclude the human. In so far only as we think of all the facts of His history on earth, of His mediatorial reign in heaven, in their organic relation to His divine-human personality, is it possible to develop solid scientific conceptions.

The formative and regulative force of the Christ-idea, held as the fundamental law of Christian thought, will become manifest as we proceed to take up in order and develop the several particular branches of a Christological system of dogmatic theology.

BOOK THIRD.

THEOLOGY, OR THE DOCTRINE ON GOD.



CHAPTER I.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

§ 54.

In the person and history of Jesus Christ God becomes to the Christian the *object* of knowledge. The living presence and self-manifestation of divine Truth, Christ reveals the Infinite in the finite, Deity in manhood. Hence by union and communion in the Spirit with Christ glorified, the Christian may know *God*, His being, His attributes, and His relations to the world. Divine knowledge may be positive as well as negative.

1. The Christian may know God positively. He may affirm what God is in Himself; also what relations He sustains to nature, and to the human race.

The possibility of such divine knowledge lies in two things: the presence of the Life of divine being in Jesus, and the divine imageship of mankind. The infinite Godhead and finite manhood are in affinity. To God man is attuned, both as personal existence and as knowing subject.

Knowing God positively, we may also know Him negatively. The false conceptions of pagan mythology and of pagan philosophy we may consistently with the laws of

rational thought set aside, also the anti-Christological theories of modern physical science and metaphysical speculation. This denial may proceed in two ways: either by logical inference, or on the basis of direct perception.

When by faith in Jesus Christ we develop positive conceptions of the Godhead, though partial and imperfect, it is legitimate to dismiss contradictory conceptions. The former logically exclude the latter.

We may proceed also by a more direct method. The light of the true God-idea enables Christian reason to discern in contradictory conceptions the lack of objective truth. Radical deficiencies and false contents address intuitive perception.

2. The faith-life of the individual theologian and of the entire Christian Church being imperfect, the product of Christian perception and Christian thinking on the nature of God will also be imperfect. Present knowledge is only an approximation to the full apprehension of the objective reality. "Now I know in part."

Thought in one respect can transcend its finite sphere. Though limited and feeble, it can rise to the perception and contemplation of absolute Truth.¹ Contrary to the maxim of Aristotle, Christological theology is warranted in maintaining that there is proportion between the ethical finite and the ethical infinite. *Finitum capax infiniti*. Finite personality answers to infinite personality. "Kant indeed maintains that divine things are totally incomprehensible, because human thought is bound to finite forms, which have merely subjective validity; but this is only

¹ Rev. Dr. Munger remarks: "The religious mind delights in mystery; it is an unconscious assertion by the highest faculties of our nature that we transcend the knowable—that we belong to, and live and have our destiny in, the infinite." *Appeal to Life*, p. 218.

true of reason as it has fallen away from God and is left to itself, but not of human reason as enlightened by the word and Spirit of God. Christianity recognizes both a searching, *ἐρευνᾷ*, and a comprehending, *καταλαμβάνεται*.¹

Under another view, however, human thought cannot transcend its own limitations. The subjective mode of apprehending the Godhead is conditioned by the immature spiritual life in which thought stands and of which it is the exponent. The civilization and philosophy of an age will modify theological thought, either by imparting somewhat of their own tone and method, or by provoking antithesis. In either case divine knowledge is pursued by Christian reason circumscribed by finite conditions more or less unfavorable to the apprehension of divine truth.

The result of sound theological thought is nevertheless valid. In the degree that through the Spirit we live in true communion with Christ glorified, and are free from false habits of theological thought rooted in traditional pagan philosophy or in modern anti-Christian hypotheses, we are able to discern in Christ the presence and manifestation of God as He is. Moreover, in so far as we think on God consistently with those laws of truth which the life of faith in Christ involves, we can develop a doctrine concerning God that is valid. Our conception of the divine essence will in that measure answer to the contents of the objective reality. Knowledge of God will be approximately true knowledge.

¹ Martensen's *Dogmatics*, p. 89; I Cor. ii. 10; Eph. iii. 18

§ 55.

As positively revealed to us in the person of Christ, we know not only that God is personal and the personal Creator, but we may know also *what* God *is*, or the contents of His being, in contradistinction from man and from the cosmos.

1. This knowledge we may have in the fellowship of life eternal quickened in Christ Jesus. "This is life eternal that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."¹ Our knowledge is not indeed final, nevertheless it is *knowledge* in the proper sense of the word. Says St. Paul: "Now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known."² The knowledge of God attainable now in the communion of the Church militant and that knowledge which we shall possess in the state of glorified existence are in kind the same, two parts of one vital consciousness. The difference is not contradiction, but a difference of mode and degree.

Our present partial knowledge of God is *true* knowledge. True it is in so far as it is Christological; and by true I mean that God is ontologically the being that in His incarnate Son He has manifested Himself to be. God in Himself, in the realm of absolute existence, is identical with the nature of God as led out³ and unfolded in the human life of Jesus.⁴ Otherwise the incarnate Son would

¹ John xvii. 3.² I Cor. xiii. 12.³ John i. 18.

⁴ Augustine says that "God speaks with a man not by means of some audible creature dinning in his ears, . . . nor even by means of a spiritual being with the semblance of a body"; but God speaks "by the Truth itself, if any one is prepared to hear with the mind rather than

not be the absolute 'Light' of the world. The supposed revelation would be a misrepresentation; and faith in His incarnate Son as the Light of God would be delusive, or at least misleading.

2. Divine knowledge is partial, not only because the life-communion of believers with Christ is not now final and perfect, but also for the reason that the revelation of God in Christ is not now ultimate and complete. The glorification of our Lord looks forward to His second coming. That epoch will be the final manifestation to His people of the glory of God in the person of His Son.² Divine knowledge in the current eon is limited by the order of Christian revelation. When the wholeness of divine-human Truth shall have been realized, and thus the final status of revelation shall be attained, we shall see 'face to face.'

But the ultimate revelation will contain no elements contradictory to the revelation already given; nor will our ultimate knowledge falsify any legitimate conception of the Godhead which we form in the present earthly period. As the second advent will complement the first advent, as the final status of the kingdom will be the ripe fruit of the present life-communion with Christ, so will the final manifestation of the Father in the Son also complement and

with the body. For He speaks to the part of man which is better than all else that is in him, and than which God Himself alone is better. For since man is . . . made in God's image, no doubt it is that part of him by which he rises above those lower parts he has in common with the beasts, which brings him nearer to the Supreme." City of God, xi. 2.

¹ "The sufferings of the present life," says Paul, "are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward." Rom. viii. 18. He does not speak of the glory that shall be revealed *in* us, as the A. V. has it, but *to us, eis hmas*. The revelation at His final coming will come from without toward us.

perfect our present knowledge. The second coming will not create in us another kind of spiritual life; neither will it inspire another kind of divine knowledge. Defective opinions concerning God will be transcended, but the ruling idea will abide. Knowledge will be purified, developed and matured, but not put to shame.

§ 56.

Positive knowledge of God's being can, however, be predicated of those only who stand in filial relation to Him through Christ. Of men of the world and of nominal Christians who are animated by the spirit of this world, divine knowledge must be denied.

1. Men of 'this world' have neither the requisite receptivity, nor the spiritual capacity. They do not in the Spirit see God with the eye of the soul; nor are they willing to receive His light. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged."¹ The world cannot receive "the Spirit of Truth," "for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him."² Non-believers do not live in communion with Jesus Christ, and therefore not in true communion with God. They are not in sympathy with His love and His holiness, nor subject to His authority; instead they are by our Lord declared to be hostile to the divine nature and to Christian revelation.

The first condition of truly knowing God is fellowship and sympathy with Him. Love alone can know love; only holiness can appreciate holiness. This primary condition

¹ I Cor. ii. 14; ii. 10, Cf. Meyer's Com. *in loco*.

² John xiv. 17.

is wanting in the natural man. How can he know God who renounces God's self-manifestation ?¹

Augustine says we shall see God "according to the measure in which we shall be like Him; because now the measure in which we do not see Him is according to the measure of our unlikeness to Him. We shall therefore see Him by means of that in which we shall be like Him."²

Nor can any supposed greater measure of divine light supply the required condition. The effect would rather be the reverse. Assuming that the 'natural man' continues in unbelief, his personal disqualification for positive knowledge of God will increase with the increasing splendor of divine manifestation. The eye of His spiritual vision being diseased, the heavenly light aggravates his blindness. He sees less truth, and he turns away with greater aversion, the more directly the beams of divine glory fall upon his unbelieving and unloving spirit.

2. Positive knowledge of God is possible only when corresponding positive receptivity is at hand in the subject. But whenever positive receptivity does exist, God is just as really accessible to human perception and apprehension, as man is accessible to the self-manifestation of God; the measure of divine truth in apprehension answers to the measure of positive receptivity. The two things are correlative.

¹ Says our Lord: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." John xiv. 21. If there be no communion of faith and love, if no keeping the commandments of Jesus Christ, there is no manifestation of Christ to a man's heart, and in consequence he has no Christian knowledge of the Father. "Every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." I John iv. 7, 8.

² Aug. Ep. xcii. 3.

If we affirm that in Jesus Christ a true revelation of the being and will of God addresses human reason, we by necessary implication affirm also that believers, the members of Christ, may know God, and know Him as He is in Himself. On the contrary, if with Aristotle, Kant and many philosophers and theologians¹ we assume that no positive knowledge of God is possible—in other words, that men may know God's will or His revealed attributes, but not God as God—we thereby assume that no positive self-manifestation of God is possible. God may manifest His will concerning His creatures, or show forth His power and goodness, but He cannot reveal *Himself*. Then it would not be true that the incarnate Son has revealed *God*, or that in Christ believers know the true God. As regards God's *being* the Christian religion would leave us enveloped essentially in the darkness of paganism.

¹ The difference between Democritus, Protagoras, Plotinus, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Calvin, Socinus, Des Cartes, Leibnitz, Kant, Hamilton, and Spencer, is a great variation in degree and form of the negative hypothesis that the being of God is not, and cannot, be known; but not, as to the ultimate question, a difference in kind. Referring to Ex. xxxiv. 6, Calvin says: "Where we may observe, first, the assertion of His eternity and self-existence, in that magnificent name, which is twice repeated; and secondly, the celebration of His attributes, giving us a description, not of what He is in Himself, but what He is to us, (non quis sit apud se; sed qualis erga nos) that our knowledge of Him may consist rather in a lively perception, than in vain and airy speculation." Inst. I, x. 2. Again: "Wherefore let us freely leave to God the knowledge of Himself. For 'He alone,' as Hilary says, 'is a competent witness for Himself, being only known by Himself.' And we shall certainly leave it to Him, if our conceptions of Him correspond to the manifestations which He has given us of Himself, and our inquiries concerning Him are confined to His Word." Inst. I, xiii. 21.

§ 57.

The knowledge which believers have of the being of the Godhead is expressed by the divine Name. Name sustains an immediate relation to object and subject. As regards its object, the Name is commensurate with the reality, being the embodiment of objective truth.

The divine Name bears a similar relation to the believer. The perception of faith, or the intuitive idea formed by the communion of faith-life with Christ, is immanent in the Name. The Name has twofold significance; as given by revelation it has objective import; as affirmed by faith it has subjective import. The Name affirmed by faith becomes the equivalent of the Name as given by revelation—equivalent in the degree that the ethico-spiritual life of believers becomes Christ-like.

I. To the question, what is the triune Being? or, what is His essential nature? we give the most rational answer when we say: God is *God*. The proposition is not meaningless tautology; it is legitimate, and so far as a definition is possible, this proposition is the most legitimate definition; legitimate for the reason that God is ultimate Truth, and the only satisfying evidence of ultimate Truth is self-evidence.

According to the Christian idea of the Divine Being, He is absolute, infinite, eternal. He is of Himself, *a se*; He is the ground of all finite existences; the source of all truths; the possibility of normal ideas; the constant condition of human knowledge and logical thought. Between Himself and every creature, or between Himself and the universe as a whole, there is a difference of nature. All things are finite; He alone is infinite. Hence as no

existence can be equal to God, so no conception of man concerning himself or concerning any finite object can in wealth or compass be the equivalent of the God-idea. By the very conditions of the question, the God-idea is ultimate. The contents are an infinitude concrete in finite form. There is accordingly no idea more certain, more original, more general, to which the Christian conception of God can be referred and by which it can be illuminated. Dr. Nitzsch says :

"The conceivable expression of the Divine essence cannot be apprehended in a higher universal, for there is none. Inasmuch as it can only be said, God is God, as occurs so many times in Holy Scripture, (Is. xliii. 13; Ex. iii. 14). Neither is there any definition of God capable of giving an explanatory idea. But a knowledge of what is distinct and defined in the being of God's diversity is found immediately in our consciousness of God."¹

The God-idea manifest in the personal history of Jesus Christ shines by its own absolute light ; and we must abide by the logical proposition of faith : God is *God*.

The answer of 'The Larger Catechism' to the question : *What is God?* might be adopted. It says :

"God is a Spirit, in and of Himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection; all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible, everywhere present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."²

All these predicates may be accepted as valid ; but no one predicate nor all combined constitute a definition, nor embody the whole of the truth. The broadest term is the first predicate, *Spirit*. "God is a Spirit." 'Spirit,' design-

¹ System of Christian Doctrine, by Dr. Carl Immanuel Nitzsch, p. 141.

² Q. 7. Cf. Conf. of Faith, II, i. The Heidelberg Catechism differs from the Westminster Standards by the fact that, waiving logical definition, it presents divine truth in concrete relations, affirming that the Author of all things is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Q. 26.

nates God's being in contradistinction from the material world. But 'spirit' is not predicable of God exclusively, nor does it necessarily embody the whole truth. Man also is in the true sense spirit. Holy Scripture speaks of different classes of created spirits. A spirit may be finite no less than infinite, and evil as well as good. For this reason other terms are necessary to qualify the conception of 'spirit.' God is a "most holy" Spirit, who is "infinite in being and perfection." The qualifying words are just and necessary, yet they are not the full equivalent of the subject, 'God.' The word 'God,' or its synonym in any Christianized language, contains a depth and a fulness that has no equivalent. We may say, He is absolute, eternal, immutable, all-wise, most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, yet we have formulated only a partial statement. No word, taken in its proper sense, is a predicate absolutely commensurate with the divine subject and to it exclusively applicable, except the word itself that names the divine subject; and that bears in its bosom a wealth and compass of import that Christian consciousness and Christian thought have only in part grasped.¹

2. In the sphere of Christian revelation the idea ex-

¹The Old and the New Testament put special emphasis on the majesty and sanctity of the Name. The Name embodies and expresses the unfathomable depth and the unbounded whole of divine existence and divine activity. Absolute sovereignty and absolute being, Creatorship and Providence, unchanging authority and infinite grace, metaphysical properties and ethical properties, all are affirmed and revealed by the Name. Therefore the third Commandment says, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain"; and when Jesus Christ said to His disciples, "After this manner therefore pray ye," the first petition He enjoined on them to offer was, "Hallowed be Thy Name."

pressed by the name 'God,' is resolved into three names. God is the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. The three names are the full equivalent of the one name ; the contents of the subject, and the contents of the trinal predicate are identical ; but the unity and fulness of the one name is explicated by the three names ; the trinality being the richer and more distinct mode of manifestation of unity.

We may therefore adopt the converse of the answer to the question ; what is Divine Being ? and say : the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost is God. This proposition also is logical ; the predicate and the subject being commensurate.

When we say : 'God is *God*,' we have in the predicate the only one word which is the full equivalent of the subject. Yet this predicate conceals latent truth, that remains latent so long as theological thought does not transcend it. Implicit truth becomes explicit truth when, moving onward with the history of Messianic revelation, theology articulates the hidden import of the one name by the final fundamental proposition : 'God is the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.' The predicate uses the only three terms which are the full Christian equivalent of the divine subject. By the very laws of rational thought, no proposition other than or contrary to this is legitimate.

Some other metaphysical predicates might indeed be valid. We might say : God is the absolute being, and we should express truth. But the predicate, absolute being, fails to pronounce the whole of the Christian God-idea. We might also use particular Christian predicates. It might be said : God is the merciful Father. The predicate would be valid, but inadequate. Merciful fatherhood, no more than absolute being, pronounces the whole of the

God-idea. Besides, the personal freedom of divine absoluteness and the redemptive import of divine mercy are neither affirmed nor discerned by theology unless theology proceed on the basis of the fundamental truth set forth by Christianity in the trinal predicate.

History shows that when scientific thought ignores or supersedes the predicate, God, as declared by the trinal predicate, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, the outcome of inquiry concerning the First Cause is a conception of the Divine that is contrary to the Christian idea of unity.

3. But neither fundamental proposition may assert the right to *enslave* theological thought. The God-idea being given, given in its infinite fulness, logical thought may unfold this fulness. Theology may get an insight into its positive contents, and distinguish them. This is to be done, however, not by comparison of the Infinite with the finite, of God with man,¹ nor by beginning with the finite and from it passing to the Infinite. The fulness of the God-idea is articulated in the first instance by an act of direct vision. The spiritual eye of the Christian sees God, sees Father and Son and Holy Ghost, manifested by Jesus Christ.

¹ The knowledge of the finite as this is realized in man *conditions* the knowledge of God, but the *contents* of divine knowledge, to be valid, must come from and be determined by that which God is. False or defective conceptions of man obscure and hinder the knowledge of God, not because man conditions the truth of God, but because the human condition of *knowing* God prevails under a defective or false character. On the other hand, a true idea of God conditions the true idea of man, not because the *contents* of human knowledge are developed from God, but, inasmuch as *God* and *man* are as to essence correlated, a false idea of God disqualifies man for truly knowing man. Rothe correctly says: "God and man are for us alternative conceptions. As we cannot truly understand the idea of man without possessing the true idea of God, so the converse is also true." Still Hours, by Richard Rothe, p. 93.

Rational thought supported and guided by direct contemplation enriches rational knowledge. But such spiritual beholding of the Godhead is legitimate and trustworthy only in the life-communion of believers with God in the fellowship of His Son incarnate.

Thus men get a perception of God originally, even on the lowest plane of ethnic religion. Belief in Deity is not an inference from other knowledge; nor is it the effect of education. All religious education, and all knowledge of men and things pre-supposes this belief. The God-idea arises in consciousness by an intuitive act. Amid the darkness of moral evil, the human spirit discerns God, feels after God,¹ lays hold of Him immediately, somewhat as the bodily eye turns toward the natural light. After the same manner, according to the same law, the God-idea is purified, elevated, enriched and perfected. As it wakes up in us by intuition, so it must grow by intuition. The pagan thinker may develop and advance his God-idea, (if the notion of advancement in the true sense be admissible,) in no other way than by direct contemplation of Deity as manifested in the cosmos, especially in his own spiritual being and consciousness. So the Christian thinker: he may progress in the true knowledge of God, the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, in no other way than by contemplation, in the Spirit, of the Godhead as manifested by the personal history of the Son of Man, guided by Holy Scripture and upheld by Christian consciousness. But as the initial intuitive act of the pagan thinker pre-supposes a profound real connection of Deity with our fallen race, so valid progress in Christian knowledge of God by the intuitive activity of the Christian theologian depends on

¹ Acts xvii. 27.

the growth of his living communion with Christ glorified, in whom alone the pure light of the absolute Godhead shines forth with unobscured effulgence.

4. On the basis of intuitive perception rational thought has legitimate functions; but those functions do not complement or perfect the God-idea. Of it rational thought can only predicate contents, in part or in whole. What is given in the intuitive idea rational reflection may set forth by way of more definite apprehension and logical judgment. This is its only office; but this office embraces a boundless realm, innumerable relations, adjustments and inferences.

So soon as we begin to think of the Godhead we get conceptions that are less comprehensive than the Name. We either affirm or deny; we affirm and distinguish the rich contents of the datum of faith, or of this datum we deny some supposed elements or relations. Whether we deny or affirm, we do not pass from the lower to the higher, nor from the less general to the more general; instead, we move in the opposite direction. We pass from the higher to the lower, from the more general to the less general. The datum of faith itself contains the positive wealth of objective truth, and this truth is its own verification to Christian consciousness. Hence the theologian does not by logical thought enter a realm where truth is more certain and more satisfying either to faith or thought, but he descends into a sphere where ideas may be less certain, less constant and less satisfying; because not fundamental but derived, not self-evident but inferential.

When the object with which logical thought is dealing belongs to the domain of the finite, both modes of rational activity are possible and may be valid, the descending and the ascending movement. We may begin with the general and pass to the particular, or begin with the general

and pass to the more general. We may perfect and certify our knowledge of a given object, a tree, by reference to a broader domain, the vegetable kingdom, or from this we may enter the sphere of an organism; and the general nature of organized life may certify and regulate the scientific knowledge of a tree. But when faith and thought rise to the contemplation of the infinitude of the Godhead, the process of differentiation, of explication, or descent, the moving from the absolute to the relative, from the whole to its properties, alone is logical.

The positive wealth of truth in its wholeness we have under its absolute form in the Christian God-idea. The attempt to discover a truth broader or more certain, or to discover a ground for the God-idea lying back of itself, is obviously self-contradictory. To assume such a possibility would demonstrate that theological judgment had mistaken the datum of faith. The creature is rightly known in the light of the Creator; but the Creator is to be seen in the effulgence of His own light.

Critical judgment and rational thought, however, hold an important place in theological science. By itself intuitive perception is inadequate. There are necessities of the reason as real as the law of faith. We must think and know no less than believe; the contents of the Christian idea of God which we have by faith in Christ, and nourish by believing contemplation, must be unfolded and organized in order rationally to come into full and satisfying possession of the divine Name.

§ 58.

The positive knowledge of God enables us to deny false or defective conceptions. We do not begin with negation and rise to affirmation. If we know who and what God is

we may sit in judgment on conceptions which contradict our positive knowledge, or on conceptions incommensurable with it. But in the absence of a positive God-idea there is no critical standard of judgment, and denials are illogical.

The Christian reason, like the natural reason, proceeds by affirmation and by negation, as necessary conditions of the dialectic process. But affirmation conditions negation. Where all affirmation is impossible, negation is absurd. In the light of positive Christian knowledge of the Godhead we may discern both the truth and the deficiencies of pagan conceptions; we may also compare Old Testament monotheism on the one side with heathen mythologies and on the other with the Christian doctrine.

Taking a survey of the entire history of the religious life of our race, we may distinguish three stages in the process of theological thought, and three general ideas concerning the Godhead. The one is the pagan conception, which is developed on the ethnic plane of human life. The other is the Old Testament conception, developed on a different and higher plane, the covenant-life of the Hebrew people. The third is the Christian idea, developed in the bosom of faith-life, that is, by contemplation and thought in the communion of the Christian Church. Possessing the God-idea manifested by the personal history of the Son of Man, we may in the light of this final positive knowledge estimate the value and force of antecedent conceptions.

It will be both logical and convenient to follow the historical order. I shall accordingly begin with the pagan conception, and from this inquiry advance to the consideration of Old Testament monotheism. When the truth and the errors of the pagan conception have been pre-

sented, and the higher, richer truth manifested by the Jehovah-revelation has been studied, the way will be prepared to set forth and emphasize the final truth concerning the triune God.

CHAPTER II.

PAGAN CONCEPTIONS OF DEITY.

PANTHEISM: DEISM: DUALISM.

§ 59.

Though the knowledge of God developed from faith in Jesus Christ is alone in the true sense positive and final; yet God has not suffered the outlying nations to live without some direct witness of Himself in their hearts. Hence it comes that the pagan world has knowledge of Deity, a knowledge which contains positive elements of truth. But in consequence of the unbroken reign of moral evil, pagan knowledge is inadequate to the ethical and spiritual needs of men. Nevertheless, the divine intuitions and the God-consciousness of fallen mankind are the requisite human basis of Messianic revelation.

I. Between man and God the creative word has constituted an essential connection, a connection not only between God's authority and man's conscience, divine goodness and human insufficiency, but between the being of man and the being of God. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nos-

trils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul."¹ Of the earth, earthy, man became a living soul by the divine inbreathing ;² in other words, the human soul is differentiated from animal souls by the peculiar fact that man is '*living*' and personal ; and his distinctiveness is attributable to this, that *his* life proceeds from the 'breath' or Spirit of God. God, the archetype, is immanent in man, formed after God's image ; image and archetype, man and God, being correlative.³ The being of man as man has its ground perpetually in God as his Author ; and man, according to the fundamental law of his existence, lives in God. Says St. Paul in his discourse on Mars' Hill : "for in Him we live and move and have our being ; as certain also of your own poets have said ; for we are also His offspring."⁴ There is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all."⁵ Our Lord says : "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."⁶ Agreeably to this general conception, God is active in all men, and all men are by their nature active in God. Their spiritual being is constantly upheld by the divine presence and sustained by divine communications.

¹ Gen. ii. 7.

² Delitzsch says: "The body of man was first formed of the moist dust of the ground by divine *πλάσις*, and then man became an animated being through divine *ἐμπνευσις*." Comm. on Gen. ii. 7, I, p. 119.

³ Paul admonishes the Ephesians to "put on the new man, (*τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον*) which after God, (*κατὰ θεόν*) hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." Eph. iv. 24. On *κατὰ θεόν* Meyer says: "Not merely divinely, . . . but: *according to God, i. e., ad exemplum Dei*, 'according to the model of God.' Gal. iv. 28. Thereby the creation of the new man is placed upon a parallel with that of our first parents (Gen. i. 27), who were created after God's image, (*κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος*;) Col. iii. 10."

⁴ Aratus, Acts xvii. 28, 29.

⁵ Eph. iv. 6, Not "in *you* all," as in A. V., the pronoun *ἡμῶν* being spurious

⁶ John. v. 17.

This original connection between God and man has survived the fall and the prevalence of moral evil. Compared with divine imageship and God's immanence, moral evil is accidental and superficial. Indeed the former constantly conditions the latter; the imageship of God being the cardinal characteristic of manhood, its *sine qua non*. If transgression had destroyed "living soul," the essence of the manhood of man would be extinct, and with its extinction the possibility of human sinfulness and human guilt would have vanished. Unchanged accountability to God and self-condemnation consequent upon transgression are both exponents of man's unique dignity, and unceasing testimonies to it. To the fact that the vital bond joining the Creator-Spirit and the 'living soul' of His creature, man, in objective fellowship is a reality, notwithstanding the disorganization and perverseness caused by sin, the religious ceremonies and the moral experiences of pagan nations bear witness; thus sustaining the pre-supposition and definite teaching of Scripture. Says Ovid:

"Est deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo.
Impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet."¹

Of this original and abiding connection man in his natural condition has independently of revelation a profound sense. He has a perception of the supermundane Object in whom his existence stands. God is in the presence of man, and by the action of His Spirit God is ever announcing Himself. As an effect of this spiritual Presence and constant self-annunciation, man dimly discerns the difference between Deity and the world. Distinguishing Deity, man believes. Belief is an intuitive act. The soul,

¹ Fasti vi. 5.

by virtue of its divine capacities, looks through the natural upon the spiritual world, seeing Him who is its Author. By this power of direct vision, finite spirit recognizes and spontaneously acknowledges infinite Spirit. Upholding man, active in man, and from the invisible realm ever addressing man, God certifies Himself to man's heart ; and man, moved by an irrepressible impulse, deeper than consciousness or volition, responds to God.

Hence arises the universal primitive belief in the unity of God. De Pressensé says that

"Max Müller's theories of primitive monotheism are vindicated, and they are further confirmed by all we know of the first developments of the great religions of civilized races in Egypt, India, and Europe. We are justified then in concluding, as he does, that the most degraded savages possess the idea of the Infinite; that is to say, of a force distinct from physical forces, acting for good or evil."¹

The unity of God is with Socrates an infinite mind. In Philebus Plato represents him as saying:

"Should we not be wiser in assenting to the other argument which says, . . . that there is in the universe a mighty infinite and an adequate limit, as well as a cause of no mean power, which orders and arranges years and seasons and months, and may be justly called wisdom and mind?" . . . "And in the divine nature of Zeus would you not say that there is the soul and mind of a king? . . . Do not then suppose that these words are rashly spoken by us, O Protarchus, for they are in harmony with the testimony of those who said of old time that Mind rules the universe."²

This sense of spiritual connection with the Divine accounts for the belief of paganism in man's continued existence in a life after death which Tylor maintains is "one of the great religious doctrines of mankind."³

¹ Study of Origins, p. 481.

² Jowett's Plato, III, Phil. p. 166.

³ Primitive Culture, ch. xii.

2. But in consequence of spiritual obtuseness produced by moral evil, the perception of Deity is confused, and the action of natural faith is abnormal. The conception of the Divine as developed in process of time on the plane of the perverted original relation is of a mixed character, containing elements of truth and elements of falsehood. The false action of natural faith affects both the intellect and the will, misleading judgment and debasing character.

Some fundamental truths are discerned, but they are held in conjunction with radical errors. That there is a Deity ; that He exerts an influence upon the affairs and the destinies of individuals and of nations ; that Deity challenges recognition, and requires worship and service ; this is seen, and with more or less definiteness universally known. But no satisfactory answer is given to questions closely allied to these truths : what is Deity ? Is He personal or impersonal ? Is He removed at a distance from the world, or identical with it ? Is Deity good, or is He evil ? Or is one god evil and another god good ? Though satisfying answers to these questions are not given, yet the problems which they involve press continually for solution.

The intuitive perception of Deity fails also to meet the demands of human life, considered under its ethical relations. Some moral facts are self-evident : there is a moral order, a right and a wrong for will and conduct ; there exists an ethical relation between Deity and man ; this ethical relation is not now true to its normal type, but has been permanently disturbed by some hostile foreign force ; the displeasure of Deity rests upon mankind ; men are continually violating the conscience ; knowing the obligation to do the right and shun the wrong, they choose the wrong and renounce the right ; right and wrong involve the rela-

tions between man and man, but especially between man and Deity ; hence Deity requires propitiation and reconciliation. These ethico-religious truths likewise are affirmed with greater or less consistency by the universal religious consciousness. But intuitive perceptions of the spiritual world do not discover a remedy. Natural faith and natural religious thought do not solve the solemn problems that grow out of these undoubted truths. No method nor power is discernible by which the moral evils which afflict the world may be removed or abated.

3. Important and precious as is the knowledge of God arising from intuitive perception ; nevertheless when judged from the standpoint of Christianity it is seen to be both inadequate and powerless for good. Intuition is inadequate ; it does not answer to the objective reality. The conceptions of Deity, of His relations to men and to nature, and of acceptable worship, not only fall short of the truth but in many ways contradict it. Pagan nations are led captive by errors which neutralize the virtue of truths latent in their divine conceptions. Intuition, moreover, is comparatively powerless for good ; it does not satisfy moral and religious needs. Instead, the forces of moral evil are multiplied by the observance of superstitious rites.

Yet pagan errors and pagan vices do not destroy, or even weaken, the native divine intuition. As the human spirit is rooted in the vital connection of humanity with God, intuitive perception, natural faith, and the knowledge of God's existence and relations to the world are the necessary product. The natural God-idea lives and develops as human consciousness lives and develops. In defiance of all kinds of destructive criticism, this idea ever reasserts its presence, often suddenly reacting with tenfold

force when the superficial understanding may be disposed to pronounce it dead.

4. The intuitive perception of super-mundane existence and the instincts of worship are the ever-living basis for Christianity. The natural religious life growing forth from the original vital connection between the 'living soul' and its Author makes men capable of a new and nobler communion. Spiritual capacity becomes a spiritual necessity, a demand to which Christianity is the adequate answer. Christian revelation in turn pre-supposes the spiritual capacities and spiritual instincts of mankind.

§ 60.

Divine intuition has among all or nearly all pagan nations been developed into a *conception* concerning the nature and character of Deity. The conception is more or less definite, and assumes different forms.

Pagan thought may identify God and the world, laying false stress on their connection. Then we have *pantheism*. Or the world and God may be separated and held asunder, false stress being laid on their difference. Then we have *deism*. If the world be referred to a cause other than God, or if body and soul, matter and spirit, be referred to antagonistic principles, we get *dualism*. Whichever conception may predominate, ideal attributes and actual powers, whether of good or of evil, may be separately invested with personality. Thus originate many gods; polytheism may be pantheistic, or deistic, or dualistic.

Rational thought, however, may react against all positive forms of apprehension, inasmuch as neither dualistic, nor deistic, nor pantheistic ideas satisfy religious consciousness. The reaction may be twofold; either positive or negative.

Positive, when the divine intuition maintains itself in the midst of thorough dissatisfaction with all conceptions concerning divine things. Then arises profound longing for better knowledge and a higher revelation. This dissatisfaction with the religious institutions of paganism constitutes a positive preparation for Christianity. The reaction against pagan systems is more commonly negative: the divine intuition is overwhelmed and silenced. Pagan speculation then issues in theoretic negation of all forms of religious belief; and it becomes unbelief or atheism.

§ 61.

Pantheism lays stress exclusively on the immanence of Deity, and thus surrenders His transcendence. God and the universe, God and man, are identical.

1. Pantheistic thought, fixing attention on the internal connection between the two opposite terms, God and the world, or, on their unity, overlooks and abolishes their essential difference. The world and God are held to be the same. Man and God are the same. The intuitive perception of the essential difference between the world and God cannot, however, by pantheistic thought be utterly abolished; in consequence there are two leading forms of the pantheistic system, according as thought lays stress chiefly on the idea of the world, or chiefly on the idea of God, the one form becomes predominantly pancosmic, the other predominantly acosmic.

Proceeding on the silent assumption that Deity is *a priori* Being, the universe is held to be an emanation from Deity. Nature and man, all finite existences, flow forth from the being of the Divine, somewhat as the oak proceeds from the acorn. Deity as such, or, God different

from the world, does not exist ; He ceases to be, as the acorn ceases to exist in becoming an oak. Entering into that which flows forth from its nature the Divine acquires reality in finite existences ; and through a series of kingdoms the Divine advances on the scale of realization.

Emanation, or the self-emptying of Deity into the world, may be conceived of in two ways, either as free or as necessary. Free it is, in that the formation of the universe, the habitation of Deity, is a process depending on the action of divine will as distinguished from the divine nature. The emanation is necessary, in that the universe goes forth spontaneously from the essence of Deity ; divine will as distinct from divine nature being ignored or denied, and emphasis put solely on the idea of a differentiating process or development. Whether the emanation be regarded as free or necessary, the Divine as it were falls away from itself ; the perception of *a priori* being loses its force ; Deity is merged into that which is developed from the divine abyss.

From this mode of religious thought arises pancosmism ; Deity being identified with the cosmos. The universal whole of things is God. Whether emanation be held to be free or necessary, the identification of the Divine with the universe may prevail under two forms. Either the Divine is identified with the interior life of the universe, or with its exterior form.

If identified with its interior life, the Divine becomes the all-pervading vitalizing principle, or, as Aristotle taught, the animating 'soul' of the cosmos. God is the indwelling impersonal force, forming types of existence, positing the laws and relations of manifold kingdoms, ever producing and ever casting off single individuals and all outward

phenomena which from year to year, from age to age, appear and disappear.

If identified with the exterior forms of things, or with both the life and the figure of the universe, the Divine is resolved into gross material substance. Every external existence, from the noblest to the meanest, even down to a dry stick or a pebble, may become a shrine, an embodiment of the divine principle, then personified and adored, as illustrated by the feticism of Africa.¹

2. As the intuitive perception of *a priori* existence, of a principle different from the world, is in pancosmism only silenced but not extinguished, pantheistic thought may experience a reaction. From false emphasis put on the world it may pass to false emphasis put on Deity. The intuition of the super-mundane may become the single, all-controlling force in thought ; it may assail the validity of sense-perception and of world-consciousness, and claim for itself alone the prerogative of reality, or of objective truth, to the exclusion of all other postulates. Then arises what has been called acosmism. The invisible God abiding in the supernal realm alone has real existence ; the phenomena of sensation, the perceptions of external things, being illusions, or shadowy, vanishing phantasms. Here the contrary fallacy meets us. Instead of identifying God with the world, the world is identified with God ; the idea of the finite and relative being merged and lost in the idea of the absolute and infinite.²

¹Waitz in his *Anthropologie*, in summing up all that can be gathered of the religion of the negroes, says that "from North to South of Africa they worship a supreme God in addition to their fetishes. His presence is revealed to them chiefly in the thunder and lightning, and in the rays of the sun." Waitz, *Anthropologie*, vol. II, pp. 168 *et seq.*, as quoted by De Pressensé in *Study of Origins*, p. 480.

²Illustrated by the pantheistic mysticism of the middle ages, as rep-

In both cases, however, the method of thought is at bottom the same. Whether pancosmic or acosmic, pantheism ignores and denies the *essential difference* between Creator and creature, between God and the world, God and man ; laying stress exclusively on one term to which the other term is falsely subordinated and with which it coalesces. Nevertheless, as neither the intuitive God-idea nor the intuitive world-idea, neither the consciousness of God nor self-consciousness, can be annihilated, pantheistic thought is never permanently satisfied with false emphasis put on either term ; it is ever oscillating between the terminal points of the arc, between pancosmism and acosmism, sometimes even in a self-contradictory way asserting in the same breath elements of both. Of the two, however, the pancosmic tendency predominates ; the idea of transcendence, as among the ancient Stoics, also in systems of modern pantheistic philosophy, Spinoza and Hegel, being lost in the idea of immanence.¹

resented by Master Eckart, Tauler, Suso, and others. There is an undertone of acosmism sounding though "Das Büchlein von der Deutschen Theologie."

¹Of pantheism Dr. Shedd correctly says: "The whole fabric of ancient and modern pantheism rests upon the *Petitio Principii*, that the doctrine of evolution has the same legitimate application within the sphere of the Infinite and Eternal, that it has within that of the Finite and Temporal,—a postulate that annihilates the distinction between the two. The idea of undeveloped being has no rational meaning, except in reference to the Created and the Conditioned." *Hist. of Christian Doct.* I, p. 13.

§ 62.

Deism, the direct contrary of pantheism, lays false stress on the essential difference between God and the world, overlooking and ignoring the vital bond of connection.

1. Deism may or may not affirm Deity to be creator. Whether it does or does not, the world and Deity are separate and exclusive. The two are set apart by an impassable gulf. Deity lives in an infinite, an unknown realm. The world, including man, belongs to a finite domain. Between the finite and the infinite there is not only no connection, but also no sympathy.

Deity is inaccessible to man; inaccessible either to man's *intelligence* or to his *will*, or inaccessible to both. The Divine is not affected or touched by man's conduct; then we have what may be called ethical deism. Or the Divine is to the human reason not an object of knowledge; then we have intellectual deism. Or both forms of accessibility may be excluded. God is both unknowable, and indifferent to moral character—to all affairs of men.¹ Shut up within His remote transcendent sphere, the world is locked out. Conversely, nature and man are inaccessible to God. God is barred out from the world. Nature is a self-related whole, moving onward according to inflexible laws immanent in itself, excluding interposition or control from the spiritual realm.

Deism shows close affinity with dualism. We have

¹ Of the God of the deist Carlyle says: "An absentee God, sitting idle ever since the first Sabbath at the outside of the universe, and seeing it go." As quoted by Dr. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 204. An image also used by Goethe.

two contrary ideas, two mutually exclusive modes of existence, the divine and the human, the supernatural and the natural. God is inaccessible to man. He cannot be known, nor can He be wronged by transgression. Man is inaccessible to God. He can receive no revelation from the divine realm, nor is he governed by divine laws.

2. If deistic thought affirms the world to be a creation, finite existence is referred to a divine fiat. God by an arbitrary act of will or by a single stroke of omnipotent power, has projected the universe, giving it an order of its own and laws of its own. This fiat having gone forth, God again returns within Himself, leaving the creation to its own fate, that is, in a condition resulting from the operation of its own physical and ethical forces.

If the possibility of creatorship is denied of Deity, then the universe is to be referred to the spontaneous action or development of matter, regarded as eternal, the *hyle*, *ύλη*, of Plato ; or to a demiurge, a world-former, a being or agent intermediate between God and material nature, as held by Gnosticism. In the latter case the opposition between God and nature, the inaccessibility of God to man, the inaccessibility of man and of nature to God, is intensified ; and deism in effect becomes the full equivalent of dualism.

3. Though contrary, deism and pantheism are in affinity. For the sense of a close connection between God and man, between God and nature, though suppressed by a false method or thought, nevertheless lives on, and makes itself felt in consciousness as really as the sense of their essential difference. Hence false emphasis put on the difference cannot permanently maintain itself. Beneath deistic thought there is a secret impulse toward the assertion of the connection and sympathy between the two imper-

ishable ideas. So long as these contrary but correlated principles are not reconciled by a method of thought doing full justice to both, deism will become the occasion for pantheism, and pantheism will give impulse to deism.

§ 63.

Dualism seeks to lay due stress on each of the two terms, affirming the existence of Deity and the existence of the world; but instead of seeking to bring about a reconciliation between the two ideas, it fixes its eye mainly on their opposition, resolving the opposition into antagonism.

1. Dualism emphasizes the contrariety between God and nature, between spirit and matter, between soul and body, or in general between the infinite, the eternal, the heavenly on the one side, and the finite, the temporal, the earthly on the other. The two spheres are averse each to the other. No reconciliation is possible; for each by its nature is contrary to the other, and excludes it. But as the sense of the close connection between the Divine and the human, the heavenly and the earthly, is imperishable, dualism may assume many and various forms.

Like Christian ethics, dualism emphasizes the contradiction between right and wrong, between the moral good and the moral evil; but confounds the good with natural light and evil with darkness, good with the soul and evil with the body; and instead of recognizing but one author of the world, who is good and good only, dualism refers spirit and matter, good and evil, to contrary original principles. The principle of evil may have a beginning and may ultimately be overcome, as in Scandinavian mythology, or it may be without beginning, and may wage an interminable warfare, as taught by the Zend Avesta.

2. Dualism asserts an irrepressible conflict between matter and spirit, body and soul. This doctrine taught by Plato, was reproduced by Neo-Platonism. The same general principle as dominant in the Persian religion, became the controlling force of Manicheism.¹

When the dualistic tendency identifies evil with matter or with body, in distinction from soul, it becomes the constant endeavor of spirit to hold under, and suppress the material and corporeal. All bodily appetites being evil, must be crushed or killed. Hence the various ascetic practices prevalent in oriental nations, and inherited by the Christian Church of the first centuries.

The element of truth pervading dualistic thought is the irreconcilable contradiction between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong. But as the good is identified with the spiritual and the bad identified with the corporeal, dualism introduces division and antagonism into the constitution of man and of nature.

3. Dualism may react, and move in an opposite direction. Instead of maintaining a conflict, it may acquiesce in the assumed contradiction between body and soul, matter and spirit, evil and good; holding the two spheres to be relatively independent; each unaffected by the other. Then loose reins may be given to bodily appetite; vices may thrive and crimes be freely committed, the soul at the

¹ Ahriman, the principle of darkness, and Ormuzd, the principle of light, "are continually at war. . . . As nature does not produce any thing *pure*, as all in it is of a mixed nature, there must be *two* principles, and not *one*; that is, like a tavern-keeper, who pours out of two casks, mixing the drink. . . . Light and darkness are consequently not mere *symbols*, but the one *is* the good and the other the evil. The difference between physical and moral evil is destroyed. . . . This is the religion which makes God fight with God." Rauch's Psychology, p. 392.

same time remaining holy and unstained by carnal indulgences. The dualistic severance of morality from religion common among pagan nations, has often been illustrated by the fanatical sects of Christendom. A remarkable instance of dualistic fanaticism, conjoining vice and wickedness with religious zeal, is furnished by the Anabaptists of Münster and the prophets of Zwickau during the first half of the 16th century.¹

4. Dualism may oscillate between transcendence and immanence. The opposite principles, good and evil, may either be held to be above the world and outside of it, or to be in the world and identical with its contrary forces. Generally the latter mode of apprehension predominates. There is then no recognition of the generic difference between the Good as divine and the good powers of the world, nor of the difference between the evil powers of the world and extra-mundane Evil.

§ 64.

Pantheism, deism, dualism, each in its own way, becomes the fruitful source of polytheism. The one divinity becomes many gods.

1. Whether pantheism be pancosmic or acosmic, it may recognize manifold reigning powers. If acosmic, these manifold powers are supernal; all are personified, each being invested with superhuman or magnified human attributes. Then the celestial realm is inhabited by innumerable deities.

If pancosmic the reigning powers are identified with laws and forces in nature and in man. Deity being the

¹ Cf. Hase's Church History, 1:373.

impersonal animating principle of the world, world-powers are personified, and every domain of external nature is peopled with male and female divinities.

But as pantheistic thought oscillates between its two unavoidable tendencies, namely, the identification of Deity with the world and the identification of the world with Deity, and as both modes of identification may be held in conjunction, polytheism may affirm two opposite classes of deities at the same time, celestial deities and mundane deities.

2. Pagan deism, though affirming the transcendent existence of God, fails, like pantheism, to maintain the unity of divine essence. Separating God from the world, it also introduces separation, even conflict, into the supernal realm. Being the projection of the natural consciousness, the supernal realm is fashioned after the image of the earthly realm. The attributes of the Divine are divided one from another; and each attribute is invested with distinct and relatively independent existence. Deism may thus have a community of celestial gods, gods that revel in pleasure in ærial banqueting halls, coldly indifferent to the conduct or sufferings of men. Moved by caprice or passion, they may now and then descend to earth and mingle with human affairs; but their deeds are arbitrary and magical, often cruel and malignant.

3. Pagan dualism fosters a double polytheism. The unity of the good is lost in diversified powers and forms of the good; the unity of the evil lost in diversified powers and forms of evil. In the sphere of darkness as in the sphere of light, in the material world and in the world of spirit, objects and ideas are invested with superhuman attributes, and honored or dreaded as deities. Good powers are worshipped that they may bestow blessings; evil

powers are propitiated by prayers and sacrifices that they may not inflict curses.¹

4. Whether dualistic, or deistic, or pantheistic, polytheism in its conception of the Divine Being retains amid the confusion of divers deities a faint sense of divine unity; but diversity and unity are at issue. Neither tolerates the other. If unity be emphasized, the idea of diversity disappears altogether. Of the divine nature all distinctions are denied. Then the God-idea is resolved into the notion of abstract or pure being, the *τὸ ὄν* of Plotinus. If diversity be emphasized, the idea of unity is overborne. All objects high and low, all powers good and evil, are deified. Of the two errors, the latter alternative, the sacrifice of unity to diversity, is the more common. It enslaves the masses of the heathen. The former tendency, the sacrifice of diversity to unity, is confined to small circles of the more profound thinkers. It characterizes the speculations of pagan philosophy.

§ 65.

Paganism bequeathed its false modes of thought to the science of Christian theology. With the conversion of gentile nations, the influence of each of these three funda-

¹ "According to Plato and Plutarch," says Nitzsch, "the Bad cannot be altogether subdued. Orus (de Iside et Osiride, § 55,) is himself circumscribed and has never yet destroyed Typhon. Dualistic worship, whether it consist in offering propitiatory sacrifices to the evil deity or not, is the religion of anxiety and hatred. If this form of religion does not offer sacrifices to the aforesaid Good Deity; but, on the contrary, as is the case amongst the heathen of Africa, and many of the Asiatic and Polynesian Islands, offers them almost exclusively to the God of Murder, War, and generally to all demons who work evil, then assuredly does such form of worship exhibit the most abandoned and most profligate aspect." *System of Christian Doctrine*, by Nitzsch, p. 44.

mental conceptions of God, and of all lines of pagan speculation, passed over into the Christian community. Leading habits of philosophical speculation became falsifying forces in theological thought.

Judaism also bequeathed its modes of divine apprehension. With the conversion of Jews, the one-sided anti-pagan habit of traditional thought became a moulding power.

The pantheistic or false *identifying* tendency of thought in Christian theology is the adverse force inherited from pagan philosophy and pagan culture. The deistic, or false divisive tendency in Christian theology, is derived mainly from Judaism. Judaism in its opposition to polytheism lay chief stress on the divine One and divine transcendence.

Dualistic thought, on the contrary, is an inheritance from two spheres of religious thought, paganism and Judaism. Jewish dualism and pagan dualism differ as to constructive type. If pagan, or pantheistic, the dual tendency arises from the supposed antagonism of matter to spirit, of body to soul, or from the coördination of the evil principle with the good principle. If Jewish or deistic, the dual tendency arises from one-sided emphasis put upon the unity and transcendence of Jehovah, who by His majesty and holiness is separated from the finitude and wickedness of the world. The dual tendency of Jewish origin is nobler and has in it more truth than the dual tendency of pagan origin; yet both phases of dualism, when logically developed, or even when allowed silently to shape apprehension and thought, prove themselves to be in conflict with the Christian idea of God, and fruitful of serious errors.¹

¹The Nestorian heresy is an example of the dualistic sentiment and habit of thought in relation to Christology.

[66.

The positive methods of formulating the native intuition of divine Being developed among pagan nations fail, one and all, to meet the deepest needs of the human spirit. Dissatisfied alike with pantheistic and deistic theories, and rent asunder by the dual war, human reason may turn against every species of theism or deism. Then atheism wields the sceptre.

1. Atheism is theoretic negation. Denying first the existence of many gods, atheism may advance to the denial of the objective truth of the divine idea. All possible conceptions respecting divine Being, divine relations, divine activities being inadequate, or to logical thought supposed to be self-contradictory, negation becomes the reaction of intellectual despair. Or the denial of God may be the logical outcome of thought starting from defective or false theistic premises.¹ Bacon says that "atheism is rather in the life than in the heart of man."

2. Nevertheless intuitive perception and divine instinct assert their force in pagan consciousness. So long as the light of Christian revelation does not shine into the darkness, pagan philosophy may abide in this negative attitude, yet the indestructible impulses of divine intuition live on in the soul, producing more or less mental disquietude. In all earnest hearts, whether they revere the

¹In our century a so-called scientific atheism is represented by Vogt, Moleschott, Büchner, Feuerbach, Haeckel and others. "The divine essence," according to Feuerbach, as translated by Prof. H. B. Smith, "is nothing but the human essence, or, better still, the nature of man purified, freed from the limits of the individual man, and viewed objectively, *i.e.*, contemplated and revered as another nature, distinguished from man. All determinations (definitions) of the divine nature are therefore human determinations."

gods or turn away from them in disgust, there is a longing after a more positive belief and a more satisfying knowledge.

§ 67.

Amid the confusion of beliefs and unbeliefs, of positive and negative theories, the sense of the unity and the transcendence of divine Being has not wholly perished. It appears in the almost universal notion of Fate. Fate is transcendent impersonal necessity. Reigning over gods and hovering over men, it magically determines their condition, their conduct, and their destiny.

1. The decisions of fate are blind, arbitrary, inflexible. Fate is *blind*: its determinations are not governed by reason or wisdom; nor are they correlated to the capacities or conditions of men. Fate is *arbitrary*: its decrees have no ground in the nature of things, no motive in the idea of truth and right. Fate is *inflexible*: its controlling force issues in events with unerring certainty; the will and the efforts whether of men or of gods to the contrary being of no avail. Seneca says:

“The Fates do lead the man that follows willing;
But the man that is unwilling, him they drag.”¹

2. Contrary to personal consciousness and degrading to human freedom as is belief in arbitrary, blind and inflexible necessity governing all things, this notion nevertheless reveals the truth that in the human soul there is an inalienable perception of a supreme Power, of a Providence disposing the affairs of the world. Rational life, enveloped in spiritual ignorance and misled by ruinous errors, bears witness to the extra-mundane existence and the sovereignty of the one true God.

¹ Epis. 107, City of God, Augustine, Bk. V. ch. viii.

CHAPTER III.

THE WITNESS OF PAGAN CONCEPTIONS TO CHRISTIANITY.

§ 68.

The intuitive perception of God, as formulated by false pagan systems, bears witness to the necessity and truth of Christian revelation. The testimony is undesigned and unconscious; but for this reason it is none the less direct and powerful.

1. Man feels his insufficiency and ignorance. His spirit protests against moral darkness, and reaches out after something better and stronger than self or the world. An inward necessity prompts an effort to commune with One who is above and beyond. A sense of alienation and disturbance begets ceaseless unrest. There is an irrepressible impulse to worship the One. Man seeks to know Him. A "still small voice" within is ever speaking of a transcendent realm.¹ From that realm he feels that he must receive guidance and help. However vain all endeavors may be to effect reconciliation and establish satisfying communion with the Divine, the endeavor must nevertheless be put forth and renewed with untiring persistence. So vital and forcible is this religious intuition that no failures, no philosophic negations, can extinguish it, or repress the effort to project an objective spiritual world adequate to human needs.

¹ Dr. De Pressensé makes the forcible remark that "all lines of the soul lead to God."

2. To the yearnings of pagan nations in their ignorance and misery, God manifest in the flesh is an adequate response,—a response felt and recognized to be adequate so soon as the eye of the soul is opened to behold the dignity and manifold fulness of Jesus Christ.

In turn, the receptive attitude of pagan religious life answers to the positive truth of Christianity. Christianity and leading features of developed natural religion bear witness directly, each to the other. Revelation endorses the validity of pagan intuitions and pagan aspirations; whilst natural religion stands forth a feeble but trustworthy witness to the necessity and truth of Christianity.¹

§ 69.

Pagan beliefs are prophetic of Christianity; the spiritual world, as projected by natural religious life, by its characteristic features calls for the religion founded by the God-man. Of pagan conceptions Jesus Christ is the complement.

1. Ethnic religions are so numerous, seemingly so contradictory, that at first view they forbid classification. Apparently there is no principle common to all. But on closer examination conducted from the Christian standpoint, we do discern unity in their diversity. To all ethnic religions there is one problem common. There is also one spiritual force that rules in the character of contrary religions.

¹ Müller says: "I make no secret that true Christianity, I mean the religion of Christ, seems to me to become more and more exalted the more we know and the more we appreciate the treasures of truth hidden in the despised religions of the world." *Science of Religion*, p. 37, as quoted by Dr. Briggs.

What is the one problem common to all? The question concerning the relation existing between man and Deity. What is the spiritual force operative in all ethnic religions? The principle that the heavenly and the earthly, God and man, must be brought into union and communion. The obstacles are great. How shall they be removed? Union and harmony are necessary. How shall harmony be attained? This has been the great, the fundamental problem of mythology and philosophy throughout all ages. The persistent efforts of the best men of all nations to solve this central problem, reveal the unity of the spiritual forces active in the development of contrary religions and contrary conceptions of God.

2. Ethnic religions are all reducible to two opposite tendencies.¹ The one is an effort to remove the alienation between God and man by bringing God down into the bosom of mankind by incarnation. This tendency characterizes oriental religions; here the idea of divine transcendence is merged in the idea of immanence. The divine is present on earth in fashion as a man, as represented by

¹ Dorner says: "Vorerst ist wesentlich zu unterscheiden das *orientalische* Heidenthum von dem *occidentalischem*: Als Representant von jenem kann uns die indische Religion, als Representant von diesem der Hellenismus gelten. Ist gleich beiden gemeinsam, Gott und Welt nicht bestimmt genug zu unterscheiden, daher sie beide Naturreligionen zu heissen verdienen, so ist doch der Ausgangspunkt beider der entgegengesetzte. Der Orient geht aus vom Objectiven, Göttlichen, der Occident vom Endlichen: aber beide suchen dasselbe, die Einheit des Göttlichen und Menschlichen. Daher dort die Lehre von den vielfachen Verkörperungen Gottes, in welchen er namentlich auch die vollendete Gestalt, die menschliche, annimmt als Kriselma um die Menschen die Wahrheit zu lehren und in seinen Himmel empor zu ziehen. Dagegen in Griechenland (wie auch in der römischen Religion und in den nordischen) werden die Menschen zu Göttern, sie steigen durch Mannlichkeit und Tugend zum Olymp empor." Dorner's *Lehre von der Person Christi*: I, Einleitung A, p. 5.

the *avatars* of Hindoo mythology, or in fashion as an animal as in the religion of ancient Egypt.

The other tendency is an effort after divine fellowship of an opposite kind. It seeks to remove the alienation and quiet unrest by lifting up man and transforming him into the Divine. Instead of incarnations we have apotheoses. The gods do not take possession of men and inhabit them, but men are changed into gods. They are raised above the ordinary conditions of human life ; and pass into orders of supernatural existence, being invested with supermundane prerogatives and magnified human attributes. This tendency is characteristic of occidental religions ; here either the idea of divine immanence co-exists with the idea of divine transcendence, or the idea of transcendence becomes the controlling force. Then appear deifications and shrines, illustrated by Roman emperors, some of whom even during natural life claimed divine honors.

3. These opposite tendencies of religious life are in close affinity. They grow out of one imperishable truth. This is, that man and God are allied, unchangeably allied. The alienation is abnormal. God's heart yearns toward man. Man's heart aspires spontaneously after fellowship with God. God's love can be satisfied and man's life blessed only in one way : by harmony and communion. This profound spiritual principle is the seed from which the oriental and occidental tendencies are developed : the one chiefly emphasizing God, the other chiefly emphasizing man ; but both aiming at the union of man with God. The complementary relation is unseen to pagan eyes ; but when the two tendencies are studied in the light of Christian truth the internal connection between them is distinctly discernible.

This imperishable mystical truth from which pagan in-

carnation and pagan apotheosis both grow forth, witnesses to the central mystery of Christianity. The primordial fact that the 'Word became flesh,' solves the pagan problem. From the study of the history of religious life two things become evident: one is, that these universal longings after divine communion, and the fruitless efforts of ethnic religions to bring about harmony and fellowship, are intimations of spiritual and rational needs which ethnic religion does not satisfy; the other, that He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life comes in response to the *universal* longings of mankind.

§ 70.

Not only are oriental and occidental tendencies a prophecy concerning the one central truth of Christianity; but each tendency also when considered by itself has prophetic significance.

1. According to pagan sentiment, Deity must descend into the domain of humanity. This necessity Christian revelation emphasizes. God *must* become man. The incarnation is not an arbitrary event; neither is it irrational or contra-human. That it is the spontaneous dictate of reason that the Word should become flesh, is the testimony borne by the *avatars* of Hindoo mythology. Rightly interpreted *avatars* are seen to be not merely wild freaks of the religious fancy, but faint foreshadowings begotten by the intuitive perception of a necessary reality. In the fulness of time the Son of God becomes the Son of Man. If we philosophically study the incarnate Mediator in comparison with oriental mythology, it becomes evident that the grotesque incarnations of paganism are dim anticipations of the Truth.

2. According to pagan sentiment man in order to fulfil his mission must ascend into the realm of the Divine—a necessity which Christianity declares and emphasizes. Man must become God-like. From the earthly he is to be translated into the heavenly sphere. The gross deifications of occidental nations are therefore not to be regarded as altogether groundless and arbitrary. Their dreams of transformation into gods are engendered by the intuitive sense of a prospective reality. In the person of the Mediator humanity is lifted up and changed into God's likeness. Perfectly realizing the image of God, the Son of Man ascends from earth to heaven, and dwells in the bosom of the eternal glory. The empty deifications of occidental religions are also unconscious prophecies of personal Truth, prophecies which the Mediator by His humiliation and exaltation accomplishes. Jesus Christ is the complement of the two principal tendencies of spiritual life and thought in all ethnic religions.

§ 71.

Undesigned and unconscious prophecies of Christianity latent in ethnic religions appear also in their history. There is a remarkable correspondence between the order in which the two ethnic systems of belief succeed each other and the successive stages in the history of Jesus Christ.

1. Like population and empire, religion moves from the East towards the West. Of the two systems oriental beliefs are the older. They seize and formulate the primary and fundamental moment in the idea of religion, namely, *God*, and God's relation to man. The mythological fact that oriental peoples bring God down from heaven to earth, implies the necessity of a movement that *begins*, not

in man, but in God, a movement that, overshadowing the world comes from above to satisfy human needs and relieve human miseries. This order foreshadowed by the history of ethnic religions is fulfilled by Christian revelation. That in Christianity which is first is God's love. He loves us, though fallen and helpless, with an unfathomable love.¹ Redemption begins in the divine counsel.² That counsel is the mystery of His eternal will of love, the going forth of the Son from the Father into the world.

2. The leading feature of oriental beliefs fails to meet all the needs of natural religious life. One class of spiritual needs is partially met, but the native intuition is not in whole satisfied. Sooner or later there comes a reaction against the one-sidedness of oriental religions. Then the history of divine belief affirms the other moment, namely, *man*, and man's relation to God.

Occidental religions are the younger. They seize and formulate the secondary, but equally essential truth. They lift man above his earthly existence, thus declaring both the fact and the necessity of a free responsive movement complementary to the condescension of God. This complementary reaction shows that, according to a law operative in the history of natural intuition, man's goal is not earth, not himself, but a good which is transcendent and heavenly. His true end is participation in God.

Such is in fact the order of sequence in Christian revelation. First God in the person of His Son descends from heaven to earth and dwells among us in fashion as a man; then the incarnate Son ascends from earth to heaven, and in union with Himself translates humanity from the domain of the temporal into the domain of the eternal. The exal-

¹ I John iv. 9, 10, 19.

² Eph. i. 14; Heb. iv. 3.

tation of man follows the humiliation of God. Man's participation in the divine glory ensues upon God's participation in human dishonor.

A remarkable correspondence confronts us. The order of Christian revelation answers to and fulfils the order in which two essential principles of intuitive perception, the manward action of God and the Godward action of man, succeed each other in the history of ethnic religions. Ethnicism anticipates Christianity. Christianity satisfies the aspirations of ethnicism.

3. The unconscious prophecies of Christianity projected by native divine intuition and apparent in the history of pagan beliefs, we may sum up and present in a threefold statement as follows :

1. Ethnic religions, or the conceptions of Deity in His relation to the world, and pagan cultus growing forth from divine intuition are prophetic of the distinctive and central truth of Christianity. True religion consists in a life-communion between God and man, wherein God is as truly active and communicative toward man as man is responsive and receptive toward God.

2. Ethnic religions are characterized by two regnant principles; the indwelling of God in men and the participation of men in God, incarnation and apotheosis. By these universal principles the religions of paganism become typical of two corresponding vital elements that fundamentally distinguish Christianity. In the person of Christ God is made man, and man is assumed into God; the two primordial factors of Christianity being thus foreshadowed and demanded by the religious life of our race.

3. The history of two distinct classes of natural religion adumbrates the order in which the union and communion of God and man have in Christ been accomplished. Chris-

tian revelation is first a movement from God towards man, from heaven earthward, then as the ethical consequence a movement of man toward God, from earth heavenward; the divine approach and the human response being reciprocally complementary.

These three general characteristics of ethnic religions show that in human nature, perverted as it is by moral evil, there is a positive basis for the monotheistic faith of the Old Testament, and for the trinitarian idea of the God-head revealed by the incarnation of the eternal Son.¹

¹C. Loring Brace says that "in analyzing the ancient belief of the priests and thinkers and artists of the Nile Valley, we find everywhere the statements that God is One and alone, and no other near Him, the One Who has made all. A Theban inscription says of God in His form of Ammon: 'The concealed spirit, a mystery for him whom he hath created, is Ammon, the ancient of days, who is from the beginning the creator of heaven, earth, the depth, and the mountains.'" *The Unknown God*, p. 12. The celebrated Egyptologist, Amelia B. Edwards, LL.D., questions the correctness of this opinion of Mr. Brace, now commonly held by scholars, that all ethnic religions originally were monotheistic. In a lecture delivered in Boston, Miss Edwards is reported as saying of the belief of the Egyptians 4000 B. C. that: "Although a highly cultivated people, these early Egyptians were, after all, barbarous in their religious beliefs, and not monotheists, as some scholars have claimed. Their worship corresponds more accurately to the totem worship of North American Indians." *Congregationalist*, April 3d, 1890, p. 122.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD TESTAMENT MONOTHEISM: THE IDEA OF ONE GOD.

§ 72.

The pre-Christian and the Christian economies both pre-suppose a basis at hand in mankind, the capability of discerning and receiving a supernatural revelation. The universal religious life is the human condition of the Christian religion. This is a *positive* basis. Messianic revelation proceeds on the assumption that the religious instincts of the natural man and his native intuitions concerning Deity are, as to their essence, valid. The religion of the Old Testament contradicts the errors and vices of paganism, whilst it builds on the true and the good in perverted human nature and religious consciousness.

1. Natural intuition says that **there is a supreme Being**; that this being is to be worshipped; that there is a heavenly good, a higher, a more satisfying good than earth or man; that there is preternatural evil, evil other than corporeal pain, or earthly poverty; that there is a period of existence after natural death when rewards are bestowed and punishments are inflicted. Such beliefs revelation does not seek either to implant or to eradicate. They are truths which both the Old Testament and the New Testament pre-suppose and confirm. The absolute truth coming from God to our race in the person of Christ recognizes and addresses the relative truth in life and consciousness as held before His advent. The two are reciprocally conditional. This relative truth constitutes man's capacity for re-

ceiving a different divine manifestation; whilst the religion of the Old Testament and of the New Testament meets the necessities begotten of human nature.

Were human nature not ethico-religious, Abraham and his posterity would have been inaccessible to Jehovah's covenant; and if the covenant of Jehovah with Abraham had not been constituted, natural religion would have been abortive. The native intuition of God and the irrepressible instincts of worship are to be viewed as being the living germs of truth and righteousness which Messianic revelation quickens and appropriates; germs, however, which, without revelation, would have issued only in failure.

2. Pre-Christian revelation occupies an attitude of thorough-going opposition to paganism. The opposition pertains, not to the manifold truths that underlie and pervade natural religion, but to the idolatries and superstitions, the errors and vices of paganism. Conceptions of Deity constructed by the pagan mind are false; pagan rites of worship are unworthy of God and degrading to men; nevertheless divine intuitions, and the deepest impulses of spiritual life, which have been grossly perverted by mythology and superstition, are divine elements active in pagan history which, on the human side, constitute the only hope of new creation and real redemption.

3. A doctrine concerning Jehovah, the one God, is exposed to two dangers. The one arises from a disposition to appropriate the deficiencies and errors developed by pagan reflection; the controlling force of new truth given by Old Testament revelation being ignored or only partially recognized. False emphasis is put on the intimate *connection* of the Old Testament with natural religion. The other danger arises from the opposite disposition to overlook the inalienable truths of native intuition, whilst stress

is laid only on the truth of Old Testament revelation. False emphasis is put on the *difference* and superiority of the pre-Christian dispensation.

The true doctrine must recognize both the great difference and the intimate connection. Native intuition has validity, has original force; but the resources of intuition are inadequate. From them the contents of a true conception of God cannot be developed and formulated; as mythology and philosophy demonstrate. The doctrine of one God, the God of Abraham living in covenant fellowship with His chosen people, must grow forth from the new positive truth of revelation. Jehovah as manifested by His covenant is principal and regulative. Yet whilst growing forth and deriving its type from revelation, the doctrine can never with safety ignore the support and modifying force of intuition.

If developed exclusively from the resources of intuition, or if the type of theological thought furnished by intuitive perception be accepted, the doctrine concerning the one God can not as to its essence rise higher than pantheism, or deism, or dualism. Old Testament theology would merely reproduce the divine conceptions which have been formulated by the pagan mind.

If developed solely from revelation independently of the modifying force of native intuition, or if the doctrine on Jehovah assume a character which denies the validity and excludes the truth of intuition, then the doctrine will be more or less foreign to natural consciousness. Having no positive reason or immediate support in the human spirit, the monotheistic conception will be somewhat external and magical, and thus fail to duly authenticate itself.

In order to maintain its validity, the Jehovah-doctrine,

whilst deriving its type and essential qualities from Old Testament revelation, must concede the necessity, validity, and value of intuition. The elements of truth latent in pantheism, no less than the truth of deism and dualism, will have to enter constructively into the idea of divine unity. A true Jehovah-doctrine will bear the same relation to the truth underlying pagan conceptions of Deity that the objective history of revelation bears to the divine image in fallen humanity.

4. The historical manifestation of Jehovah does not transcend man's inborn or acquired capacities. At every epoch in its progress revelation involves the correlation of these two factors, the human and the divine. Jehovah reveals Himself with greater fulness, in proportion to the increasing power of positive response and appropriation developed among His people.

The same law reigns in the history of the Jehovah-doctrine. No true conception of the one God can be absolutely new. New and better it can be only in a relative sense. Beginning with the germ at hand in common God-consciousness, the Jehovah-doctrine transcends natural imperfections by a process of growth. Recognizing the truth affirmed by pagan beliefs, the superior conception is in one respect the same as the inferior. It is the inferior changed into the superior. As revelation is progressive, so the Jehovah-doctrine advances from the less perfect to the more perfect. The advance depends primarily upon the positive force of revelation. But for this revelation there would not be in the Scriptures of the Old Testament any difference between the Jehovah-conception and pagan mythologies. Yet this advance from the less perfect to the more perfect conception of divine Being would not have been possible if the less perfect had not been at hand in

natural God-consciousness, and if the germ of divine truth in natural God-consciousness had not been the starting-point.

§ 73.

The native intuition of God grows forth from the original but perverted relation existing between God and man. The Jehovah-conception strikes its roots into the same soil, but it is radically different because developed from a specifically different relation, constituted and perpetuated by the Abrahamic covenant.

Pre-Christian revelation passes through a succession of periods. With these periods the Jehovah-conception is in sympathy ; hence the Old Testament idea of one God has a history corresponding to the progress of revelation. It is the final stage of this idea that must stand as the true exponent of Old Testament teaching.

1. The relation existing between God and the human race on the plane of paganism, though real and vital, is abnormal ; the original communion being perverted by the active forces of moral evil. Pagan conceptions of Deity are defective because they grow forth from this abnormal relationship. Though abnormal and therefore insufficient, yet if this concrete spiritual connection did not exist, and if God did not announce Himself to man's heart, paganism would have no intuitions of God, no instincts of worship, and it would formulate no philosophical conceptions whatever of a supreme Power.

The Jehovah-conception is better, higher, and more rational, because the original Messianic promise developed in course of time into the Abrahamic covenant, especially the Messianic promise advanced to a still more perfect period of ripeness in the Mosaic economy, brought about a

better, a truer, a more satisfying fellowship between God and the Abrahamic nation. This higher fellowship is supernatural; supernatural because effected by spiritual forces other than those active in the history of ethnic religions. There, in ethnic religions, fellowship prevails by virtue of the original creation of man in God's image, but an image now distorted and falsified. Here, among the chosen people, a fellowship prevails by virtue of an advent of God different in kind from all God's manifestations in the fallen economy, an advent which was the preliminary period of the history of redemption by the Seed of the woman.

2. Pre-Christian revelation has distinct epochs. The fellowship between God and His people is not the same mechanically from the day of the Protevangel to the close of the Mosaic economy; the fellowship passes through successive periods of growth. It moves onward by the operation of divine-human forces, and as it unfolds it undergoes organic changes, passing from crude beginnings step by step toward mature communion. Says Dr. Briggs: "The Hebrew religion is a religion of union and communion with God, a living, growing, everlasting religion."¹

Waiving a consideration of particular differences which appear at different epochs in the history of the Abrahamic people, I shall confine inquiry to the more mature form of the Hebrew conception.

¹ Messianic Prophecy, § 10.

§ 74.

The Hebrew conception of God contradicts all the false modes of apprehension that have grown forth from intuition among pagan nations; at all points affirming positive truths directly contrary to the errors of pagan mythologies and philosophies, and to the deficiencies of pagan rituals.

1. In contrast with pantheism, the Hebrew conception affirms the transcendence of Jehovah. He existed before the world. He was when the world was not. He is above and beyond the world. Transcendence is affirmed uniformly and consistently. In Hebrew consciousness there is no confusion of the spiritual with the material, of divine powers with natural forces or human passions. The heavens and the earth have had a beginning, being referable to Jehovah's will. Jehovah alone is without beginning of years or end of days. Inhabiting eternity, a realm other than the heaven of heavens, Jehovah's existence is ever distinct and different from the existence of the universe.

The pancosmic and acosmic forms of pantheism are accordingly excluded, the element of truth in each being conserved. The one-sided immanence of the divine Being is denied. There is no identification of the nature of God with the nature of the world. On the contrary, Jehovah is the Maker of heaven and of earth, which He likewise ever upholds and governs. Pancosmism is superseded.

At the same time the reality of the world is affirmed. Heaven and earth, nature and man, are dependent but *actual* existences. By Jehovah's creative Word the world moves on from age to age, ever by His will upheld in its diversified relations to Himself. The false acosmic ten-

dency is likewise superseded. Yet Jehovah's transcendence is not separation from the world ; transcendence is consistent with His presence in nature, especially with His presence among His people. "I dwell in the high and holy places, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."¹

2. The conception of the being of Deity is thus radically different. Jehovah is not an unfathomable abyss of impersonal essence. He does not develop His existence, like the plant from the seed. He does not become reality in a world which spontaneously emanates from His nature. Nor is His being divided into supernal and mundane powers,—powers that with Himself have part in the government of the world, and may receive divine homage due from men. On the contrary, Jehovah is *one*, the *personal* One, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.² "I am that I am."³ His manifold qualities, His activities and His relations stand in the union of object and subject, the spiritual unity of reason and will, of intelligence and freedom. Jehovah is the self-existing ego, without beginning of years or end of days, ever maintaining His transcendent personal existence in contradistinction to the created and dependent personality of man.⁴

This idea concerning Jehovah, that He is personal Spirit, declares the deep, broad chasm between the religion of the Old Testament and paganism, between the virtue of the Abrahamic covenant in its bearing on the doctrine of God and the original communion of God with man as falsified by sin. Under one form or another mythology and

¹ Is. lvii. 15.² Is. xli. 4; Rev. i. 8; Heb. xiii. 8.³ Ex. iii. 14; Ps. xc. 2.⁴ Ps. iv. 6, 7; cii. 26, 27.

pagan philosophy ever confound Creator and creature, thus losing the idea of divine unity and divine personality. But the theism of pre-Christian revelation, the God-idea gradually developed in the history of the Abrahamic people, ever distinguishes Creator from creature, God from the world.¹ Holding the world and God to be, as to kind, different existences, the necessary connection between the two objective spheres is nevertheless consistently affirmed. The one is unchangeably the creature, the other is unchangeably the Creator. From age to age the continuance of the creature pre-supposes the energy and presence of the Creator.

§ 75.

In contrast with deism and all deistic tendencies of thought, the Jehovah-conception affirms the *connection* between God and man, between Creator and creature.

1. The world is accessible to God; being made by Him and upheld by Him, He rules in it and rules over it; all natural objects and natural laws pre-suppose His presence, and are responsive to His touch. Unconscious nature and nature's self-conscious lord are both in sympathy with

¹ Ashley says: "The moral system of pantheism cannot be consistent. All things being God, are equally just and holy. The instincts of the brute are God, the passions of the vile are God, as are the virtues of the pure. If the righteous claim to be a part of the infinite whole, so may the vicious; and if the whole comprehends all possible forms of animal and intellectual being, then all that is depraved, murderous, obscene, disorderly, is the action of God, *is God*, is altogether just, or necessary, since they all are inseparable from the same nature.

"Good and evil in this system lose their proper meaning, as all are placed upon an equal basis, and resolved into one general principle." Christianity in its Idea and Development, by Rev. R. K. Ashley, p. 81.

their Author. In turn, Jehovah is accessible to all men, especially to His chosen people. The covenant, the Mosaic ritual, and all the services prescribed by the ceremonial law, though including worldly elements, are nevertheless perpetual *bonds* of spiritual connection and heavenly communion.

The distinction between God and the world and the great difference between creature and Creator, are maintained consistently with the internal connection, whilst the notion of the separation of God from the world and their reciprocal exclusiveness disappears.

§ 76.

As contrasted with dualism, the Jehovah-conception affirms Jehovah's self-existence and absoluteness. The notion of a contradiction between matter and spirit, body and soul, is superseded, whilst the qualitative difference between right and wrong, good and evil, is pre-supposed and pronounced.

1. Jehovah alone is self-existent. Since He is the Author of the heavens and the earth, all things material no less than spiritual are originally and essentially *good*.¹ "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Thoroughly at issue with all grades of moral evil, Jehovah nevertheless governs all realms, including the kingdom of evil as well as the kingdom of good, all normal and all abnormal forces and agencies. Evil forces are subordinated to the good, the powers of falsehood and

¹ Delitzsch says: "The creation of God was designed for propagation, not for destruction. The subsequent order of the world is not the original; at the beginning peace prevailed between man and the beasts, and among the beasts towards each other." Comm. on Genesis, I, p. 102.

wrong to the authority of right and truth ; and perverse agencies are so disposed that in the end they subserve the original design of the creation and the covenant.

2. Evil, whether physical or moral, is not an original principle. It is a relative force not absolute, accidental not necessary. Evil begins in the free self-perversion of personality ; and is therefore foreign and contradictory to the divine idea and the organization of the world.¹ The antagonism between the evil and good does not consist in the essential difference between the world and God, body and soul, matter and spirit, but antagonism is referable to the false action of the autonomy of the creature ;² by this false action the harmony of the original constitution of things has given place to discord and disorganization.

The important elemental truth of pagan dualism that evil and good are contradictory and exclusive is conserved ; but the false antagonism of matter to Spirit, of the corporeal to the rational, is overcome and eliminated ; unity supplants division, whilst the idea of constant antagonism is resolved into consistency and harmony.

3. The truth of pantheism is the immanence of God, (His presence with the world and in the world), active in its laws and directing its movements toward their ultimate

¹ Ashley says: According to the Mosaic doctrine, "Satan is the enemy of man, of all righteousness. He brought sin to man and woe to the world. Indian dualism, and Moses, present the same fact of good and evil, but differ in the location of the cause. Matter, as presented by Moses, is all good. But Satan is the blackness of all darkness. Satan comes only into the fair and harmonious world, as a disturber, as an enemy; not as a co-equal law. He is subordinate to the Holy One, who, in the hour of man's moral delinquency and gloom, gave promise of superior blessings, and the full subjection of Satanic power to righteous law and eternal good." Christianity in its Idea and Development, by Rev. R. K. Ashley, p. 117.

² Gen. iii. 1-8.

end. The truth of deism is God's transcendence, His essential difference not only from moral evil and physical evil, but especially the difference of divine personality from human personality, of the divine nature from the nature of all finite things. Of dualism the truth is the difference between spirit and matter, between soul and body, and the contradiction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness.

These fundamental truths the Jehovah-conception affirms and includes ; yet rejecting the hypothesis from which each false system proceeds, construes these truths from the standpoint of an idea undiscoverable by philosophy and unknown to mythology, the idea of the covenant between Jehovah and His people rooted in the Messianic principle as expressed in Genesis iii. 15.

4. Not sunk into nor confounded with nature, but the transcendent personal Spirit; not divorced from the world, but living and active in it ; not the good principle warring against an original unsubdued evil principle, but the absolute One, the Creator and upholder of all things ; Jehovah is a Being essentially different as to His metaphysical and ethical qualities from the deities of all nations.

For such a singular phenomenon in the religious history of but one nation of the ancient world there must be an adequate cause.

CHAPTER V.

JEHOVAH-CONCEPTION THE OUTGROWTH OF THE COVENANT.

§ 77.

This anti-pagan idea of God is the product neither of native intuition nor of external divine teaching; it is the gradual outgrowth of a new relation, a new personal fellowship, established between God and man, between Jehovah and His chosen people. This new relation begins in the primeval promise¹; it is asserted and developed in the covenant with Abraham and his seed; and it reaches relative perfection in the Mosaic economy and in prophetism.

I. What is the covenant? The answer has been given that it is a compact, an agreement between two parties binding each to certain stipulated acts toward the other. There is truth in this answer, but it is superficial.

The covenant is more than a compact between two parties conditionally binding each to perform certain stipulated acts toward the other. It is rather of the nature of an *institution* of which Jehovah and Abraham with his posterity are mutually members. From this real communion between Jehovah and His people on the basis of the Messianic idea, grows forth the Hebrew conception of the one God.

The new relation between God and His chosen people pre-supposes the original relation between God and man

¹Gen. iii. 15.

formed by the creative Word. The new relation includes divine teaching, or the communication of better knowledge concerning God and His will. But the covenant differs both from natural intuition, and from divine teaching. If the word be rightly interpreted, the meaning of it may be seen to be latent in its etymology, namely, *con* and *venire*. The covenant is a divine advent, a special coming of Jehovah to a chosen man, and an entering into fellowship with him, who, responsive to this advent, turns from other gods and enters into fellowship with Jehovah. These two forces, the approach and manifestation of Jehovah and the response of Abraham to divine approach, constitute a spiritual institution, a household in which Jehovah and His chosen servant live together on earth. Bound together ethically, each is active toward the other. Jehovah calls and commands, Abraham obeys; Jehovah promises a son and a country, Abraham believes; Jehovah authorizes sacrifices, Abraham erects an altar and brings his offerings; Jehovah appoints the sign and seal of acceptance and blessing, Abraham accepts and confides in circumcision; Jehovah promises that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,¹ Abraham receives the word

¹ Gen. xii. 1-3; xviii. 18; xvii. 15. On Genesis xvii. 15-18 Dehnbach says: "A point of unprecedented lustre in the Old Testament, for Jehovah here swears what He promises, as He does nowhere else in His intercourse with the patriarchs (compare the passages referring to it, xiv. 7; Ex. xxxii. 13; Luke i. 73; Acts vii. 17) and for the first time in the sacred history; for His promise that there should no more be so universal a deluge is indeed like an oath in value, Isa. liv. 9; but is not one in words. He swears by Himself, because He can swear by no greater, Heb. vi. 13, engages Himself by means of His own Person. . . . Thus the form as well as the contents is exuberant, for the victor of Moriah is higher than the victor of Dan. Abraham conquered himself and offered up Isaac. He won him back as ancestor of an innumerable world, subduing people, possessing the gate of their enemies, and a seed blessed to be a blessing to all nations. Thus

and rejoices in the hope of fulfilment. Through a later chosen servant, Jehovah appoints a ritual, which foreshadows the advent of a mighty prophet and king; in turn the posterity of Abraham observe this symbolical ritual, looking forward with desire towards the day of the fulfilment of the nation's hope.

2. These two correlative members, Jehovah and Abraham, the blessing of Jehovah bestowed on His people and the responsive acceptance by the people of His gifts, distinguish the pre-Christian covenant, an institution whose beginning is the protevangel. From the Edenic promise as from a germ this new fellowship grows forth, unfolding its supernatural qualities with greater power in the progress of the ages.

The Abrahamic covenant is accordingly a concrete, divine-human fellowship, not an external compact, not an abstract agreement. It is important to consider the difference between these two conceptions.

§ 78.

The notion of an agreement between God and man, between Jehovah and Abraham, resolves the covenant into an abstraction. Its force prevails chiefly in the sphere of thought and will. The connection is notional and moral, not in any sense vital. Though falling short of the whole truth, the theory has in it valid elements. It emphasizes the essential *difference* between the two terms of the covenant, but fails with equal force to emphasize the union.

1. This abstract view of the covenant involves deistic tendencies. Jehovah dwells at an infinite distance in the

gloriously recompensed does the patriarch depart, v. 19: 'And Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beër-Seba.' Com. on Genesis ii. p. 90. Cf. Messianic Prophecy by Dr. Briggs, pp. 84, 89.

heaven of heavens ; the shekinah in the Holy of Holies is exclusively symbolical. His people, externally separated from Him, live in the holy land. The principal difference between them and other nations consists in this, that Jehovah protects and delivers the elect nation by His omnipotent power, bestowing innumerable temporal and spiritual blessings ; whilst to other nations these special blessings are denied.

Considered under a moral aspect, the relation between the two parties is equally external. Jehovah is true to His word. He blesses Israel when faithful to the terms of the agreement ; when unfaithful Israel suffers the penalty of His judgments. His people are bound to obedience, humility and reverence. But each, Jehovah and Israel, abides and is active in his own sphere, Jehovah in heaven, Israel on earth ; the connection is none other than that which arises from acknowledged authority on the one side, and willing subordination on the other, from the teaching of Jehovah's will and the reverence of Israel for Jehovah's word.

2. This abstract conception conserves the infinite difference between God and man, affirming the transcendence of Jehovah and Israel's alienation from Jehovah through transgression. This is important anti-pantheistic truth. But the conception emphasizes chiefly the extreme terms of the covenant, not the mean term. It distinctly affirms God ; it distinctly affirms man ; thus rightfully holding the infinite and the finite apart.

But positive reciprocal fellowship of Jehovah with His people is not affirmed. The communion is external and notional. Jehovah speaks, commands, promises ; Abraham hears, obeys, believes. Between the two parties there is a connection by words, by knowledge, by the exercise of

will; but as to reality, embracing divine life and human life, there is no communion. God and man remain disjointed. There is no real advent of God. Jehovah and His people do not live together on earth in an economy which is both heavenly and earthly. The kernel of Old Testament revelation is thus lost. The central and distinctive feature of the covenant disappears. This is a fundamental defect; neutralizing the plastic force of the covenant idea in the sphere of theological thought. Under these conditions, a conception of Jehovah formed on the basis of the Abrahamic covenant developed into the Mosaic economy, cannot entirely escape the errors of deism; and cannot therefore effectively introduce the Christian conception of the triune God.

§ 79.

The Abrahamic covenant is to be regarded as a concrete fellowship, prevailing not chiefly in the sphere of knowledge and volition, but in the sphere of personal life. Affirming the transcendence of Jehovah, the covenant actualizes a positive advent of Jehovah to Abraham and his posterity. The generic difference between God and man is maintained, but divorce and contradiction produced by transgression and guilt are overcome by communion, the supernatural presence of Jehovah and the responsive faith and obedience of His people—a communion which is typical of the impending personal advent of God in Jesus of Nazareth.

1. Just in this peculiarity, the singular character of the reciprocal fellowship between Jehovah and His people, may be seen the distinctive anti-pagan genius of the covenant.¹ Divine being is confounded neither with nature nor

¹ "Es ist nicht zufällig," says Dorner, "dass die Religion alten und neuen Testaments sich selbst mit dem Namen eines *Bundes* bezeichnet,

with mankind ; but dwelling above and beyond the world, God is supernal and infinite personal Spirit. Mankind has by transgression fallen away from God ; but human nature is not dualistically divided against itself. There is no irreconcilable antagonism between body and soul. Man refers sin to his own will, and discovers himself to be guilty before God, and justly condemned. The generic differences between divine being and human being prevail ; and juridical issues between God and man develop their full force.

Nevertheless Jehovah, dwelling in infinite majesty, and Israel, alienated from Jehovah by the guilt of sin, are closely connected as Father and son.¹ They live together the members of a spiritual family. Jehovah makes His abode in the midst of His people as Father among His children; and day by day His people have access to His presence as children to their Father. This institution is directly suited to the normal and abnormal needs of man, considered both in his relation to God and to himself. Contrasted with ethnic religions it is new ; being contrary to natural conceptions of Deity, contrary also to the dictates of the natural conscience.

2. Being a real communion between the one personal

womit vielleicht selbst das Wort *religio* zusammenhängt. Denn in dem Bunde ist eine Gemeinschaft zweier ausgesagt, die beiderseits als festes, gleichsam bindendes Lebensverhältnisz gedacht wird. . . . Wir können die Gottesidee schon ursprünglich nur haben durch Gott und Gottes That; schon insofern ist Religion nicht reine That des Menschen, sondern kommt nur auf Grund der göttlichen That zu Stande. . . . Nicht bloß erhält Gott die Welt. . . . sondern durch ihn wird auch die Gottesidee lebendig und wirksam. Wir wissen in jedem Augenblick Gott nur durch Gott und durch seine lebendige manchfache Bezeugung wird die Religion, wo sie ist, in ihrem Fortgang erhalten." Glaubenslehre, I, p. 552.

¹I Chron. xxviii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 9; Hos. xi. 1; II. Chron. xx. 7; Isa. xli. 8.

Jehovah and His chosen people, the covenant is divine-human, a fellowship in which both God and man are factors. On the one side is the living God, almighty, righteous, wise and merciful; on the other side is dying man, dependent, sinful, short-sighted, degraded and hopeless. Parties, so different in constitution, in resources and in moral character, become so closely connected that they form one community; one in purpose and in history, one in sympathy, confidence and hope.

At this point we may discover wide differences between the Jehovah-conception of the Old Testament and pagan notions concerning the divine Being in His relations to human life. Jupiter is the god of the sky; Neptune of the sea; Pluto of the under-world. The notional connection is between God and some natural object. When the pagan mind relates the divine to the human, it is commonly a connection between God and some quality or vocation of man. Mercury is the god of eloquence; Mars the god of war; Venus the goddess of sensual love. There is no direct connection between divine personality and human personality. Perhaps the nearest resemblance to the covenant principle is furnished by the sympathy between Socrates and his oracle or voice.¹

The Abrahamic covenant introduces a new idea. Rising above the inanimate and natural, above the qualities and passions of men, Jehovah is the God of Abraham, of

¹ In the *Apology* of Plato, Socrates is represented as saying to his Athenian judges: "You have often heard me speak of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign I have had ever since I was a child. The sign is a voice which comes to me and always forbids me to do something which I am going to do, but never commands me to do anything, and this is what stands in the way of my being a politician." *Apology*, Jowett's edition, I, p. 329.

Isaac and Jacob, and their seed after them from generation to generation.¹ The covenant is a fellowship directly between *Person* and *person*, between Spirit and spirit. Jehovah is not the God of impersonal laws, nor of natural impulses, nor of secular vocations; He is the God of *man*, the God of an elect person, an elect family, an elect nation.

The fellowship affects both terms. Jehovah becomes the God of Abraham; Abraham becomes the man of God. Moreover, the two parties, so widely different in constitution and character, stand in the relation of affinity. Jehovah is father to Abraham. Abraham is son to Jehovah. A divine Person is living in paternal fellowship with a human person; a human person is living in filial fellowship with a divine Person. As the covenant exists between persons, and as the parties are, the one God and the other man, this personal fellowship asserts the Messianic principle, the idea of divine-human community, an idea pervading the Mosaic economy, which is the distinguishing plastic force during the entire history of the Abrahamic nation.

§ 80.

From the Abrahamic covenant has been developed the Hebrew conception of God. Of Old Testament monotheism the fellowship of the covenant is the basis and the principle. Both terms, God and man, are active in its production. The conception of Jehovah grows as the fellowship becomes more intimate, as the religion of the Hebrews approaches its ideal character.

As the conception advances it reveals negative and positive phases. It fails, on the one hand, fully to satisfy the religious life and thought of the people: on the other, it indicates an impending transition to a differ-

¹ Ex. iii. 15, 16.

ent idea of God, an idea consistent with the monotheistic principle, yet qualitatively different from the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

1. The conflict and the new fellowship beginning with the promise respecting the seed of the woman,¹ ripening into the covenant with Abraham, symbolically realized by the ritual, is both the basis and the principle of the anti-pagan conception of Jehovah. The former renders the latter possible. Hebrew monotheism differs from pagan conceptions because in Abraham and his posterity the positive connection between man and God differs from the abnormal relationship of all out-lying nations. From this covenant with Abraham, that is, from the unique fellowship of Jehovah in which the chosen nation stands, the conception of Jehovah derives its essential and distinctive characteristics. Unity, personality, righteousness and compassion as apprehended by representative men, develop from the self-manifestation of Jehovah to His people, a people by the tuition of this covenant gradually educated and disciplined to a plane of ethico-spiritual elevation where, in their history and personal experience, these divine predicates are manifested and therefore discernible.

2. The conception pre-supposes the free activity of the Hebrew mind as well as the underlying force of spiritual intuition; being the product of two factors, of the rational life of the covenant people no less than of special divine Presence. God cannot externally impart true knowledge of Himself, either by one supernatural act or by a series

¹ "The protevangelium is a divine blessing wrapt in judgments. It predicts the ultimate victory of the seed of the woman over the serpent, after a conflict in which both parties will be wounded." Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*, § 29.

of acts. Divine teaching implies human learning, that is, psychical susceptibility, and especially a corresponding progressive moral and rational activity under divine tuition. The Hebrew knowledge of Jehovah becomes as really the product of the ethico-rational life of the Hebrews as it is the consequence of heavenly communications. Hebrew intuition is purer, Hebrew psychological activity more divine, because the ethico-religious life of the Hebrews, the distinctive spiritual qualities of the elect people, stand in this divine-human community, and derive from it nourishment and the impulse toward a higher character. Their sub-conscious religious life is fashioned by the silent, heavenly influences of Jehovah's perpetual presence.

Stress is to be laid on the psychological action of the chosen nation agreeably to the laws of universal human life ; but psychological activity and the anti-pagan conception of God developed in the history of the Hebrew nation, pre-suppose at every point and throughout the nation's entire history that new Presence, that extraordinary self-manifestation of Jehovah which distinguishes the covenant. Apart from the divine-human community, the heavenly household of which Jehovah and His people are correlatively members, the anti-pagan monotheism of the pre-Christian economy, cannot be duly interpreted, nor will the prophetic genius of the Jehovah-conception have legitimate force in Christian theology.

The fellowship between Jehovah and His people, becomes more intimate with the progress of the history of the covenant. Gradually Jehovah discloses Himself, His will, His qualities, especially His purpose concerning the Messiah. Coming nearer to His people, He reveals more clearly the affinity of divine Spirit with the spirit of man. On the other hand, His people, gradually disenthralled

from the moral evils and the religious errors of paganism, become more faithful to their covenant obligations, and enter into more unselfish sympathy with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. As the history progresses, the divine capacities of the theocratic nation are more and more unfolded and disciplined; and as divine capacities mature, divine aspirations are purer, Messianic hopes more definite, and the people become better fitted for a communion with God different and higher than the fellowship established by the covenant inherited from their fathers.

3. From the time of Samuel onward, richer self-manifestations of Jehovah appear. Answering to the progress of revelation, there is also an inner circle of Hebrew life that moves on a higher plane of divine fellowship. And just for these reasons insufficiencies are perceptible on the divine side as on the human side of religion. There is an unrealized affinity of Jehovah with His people, of God with man. There is also an unsatisfied capacity of man for union with God. Insufficiencies growing out of the best state of Hebrew religion, form the historical necessity, for a different fellowship, a more glorious revelation, and a better conception of the Godhead.

This historical necessity evinces the mystical forces of the woman's Seed, the Seed of Abraham, the Prophet like unto Moses, the Son of David, coming in flesh and blood. Hebrew monotheism, the conception of the one God, advances and is modified according to the advancing epochs and stages of this mystical Presence. The Promise living in Hebrew history becomes a deeper, broader power, quickening stronger desires, inspiring brighter hopes.

Various self-consistent changes come to view. The conception concerning the Messiah is less exclusively hu-

man ; it reveals divine attributes and divine prerogatives. The conception concerning Jehovah experiences a twofold modification ; on the one hand it is less exclusive, less super-human, less super-mundane ; on the other, it approaches nearer the Messiah-conception. There is some oscillation, especially in the teaching of the later prophets, even seeming confusion.¹ Jehovah Himself appears to be the coming One, Immanuel, God with us ; nevertheless the promised One is to be "a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." Such seeming confusion, however, such logical insufficiency, is but the historical intermingling of older forces and newer forces, declaring a state of maturer spiritual life and of better divine knowledge, which is the legitimate fruit of the healthy development of the Hebrew religion and harbingers the certain approach of the promised eon—the new era of religious life and knowledge.

The God-man covenant in Abraham and his family, developed into the divine-human ceremonial economy instituted by Moses, cultivates and in process of the ages creates an unsteady belief and an obscure perception of a twofold personality, of One who is about to come, a man, the Son of Man, the Son of David, the Prince of peace, clothed with more authority from on high than Moses, more highly endowed with wisdom than Solomon, wielding mightier power and crowned with greater glory than

¹ "Isaiah and his successors," says Dr. Briggs, "distinguish between carnal Israel and the righteous remnant. This remnant is still further reduced in the persecutions of the last days of the kingdom of Judah and of the exile, until it culminates in the conception of a unique servant, a second Israel, who suffers for the sins of all and achieves redemption for all; and in a Son of Man who comes upon the clouds of heaven, to triumph over the anti-Christ in whom the hostile powers culminate." *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 478.

all other men, through whom will be brought to pass the richest manifestation of Jehovah's covenant.¹

The primary Hebrew conception of Jehovah in process of its growth and transformation prefigures the Christian conception of the Godhead. During the final stages of its history the covenant demands what from the beginning it prefigures.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION; OR, THE IDEA OF THE TRIUNE GOD.

§ 81.

By a new creative act in the history of Messianic revelation the divine-human covenant becomes the divine-human Person, the incarnate Son of God ; and the theocratic community is transformed into the kingdom of God. As a consequence of the regenerative force of this new epoch, the consummation of Old Testament history, belief in Jehovah, passes over into Christian faith. Hebrew monotheism becomes Christian theism.

1. In the divine fellowship inaugurated by the covenant with Abraham, Jehovah is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, a formula that expresses the germinal truth of the abiding spiritual community.² In the kingdom founded by Jesus of Nazareth God comes to view in the new character of Father and Son and Holy Ghost. The truth of God as One, grows into the self-

¹ Is. xlii. 5-16.

² Ex. iii. 15, 16.

manifestation of One in Three ; and the revelation of one God as transcendent and personal, is developed into the manifested existence of Three in One.

The organic transition from unity to triunity changes the relative value of Hebrew monotheism. When the 'Seed' of the woman appears in the Person of the Son of Man, when the teleology of the Abrahamic covenant is fulfilled by the Word made flesh, the ceremonial law and theocratic institutions are superseded and abolished.¹ So the more perfect manifestation of God as Father and Son and Holy Ghost supersedes His pre-Christian manifestation as the God of Abraham, and of Isaac and of Jacob. The pre-Christian monotheistic principle is superseded, not because untrue or ineffectual, but because, being effective and true, it is historically developed, taken up and realized by the more complete Christian revelation of the constitution of the Godhead in the kingdom of heaven.

2. Hebrew monotheism and Christian theism are internally correlated ; the former anticipating the latter, and the latter pre-supposing the former. Belief in Jehovah, the one God, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, conditions faith in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.² If a pure monotheism had not lived and grown in

¹ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; Rom. x. 4. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; Gal. iii. 24, 25; Cf. II Cor. iii. 7-11; Heb. xi. 13, 39, 40.

² Monotheism is fundamental and common to both economies, the old and the new. The God of Christianity is the God of Judaism. In the transition, revelation passes not from unity to trinity, but from unity to unity, from involution to evolution, from an imperfect and transient idea of one God to the perfect and final idea of the one God. The contrast appears in the difference of self-manifestation of the constitution of the divine *unity*.

the religious history and the religious consciousness of the Hebrew people, faith in the One God, who is Father and Son and Holy Ghost, would not readily have taken firm root in the apostolic Church, nor would this faith have been steadily developed in the consciousness and thought of subsequent ages. . "Salvation is of the Jews."¹

Jesus is the Son of Man. The Son of Man is the Son of God and the Son of Man in one person ; He is both the completion of the covenants and the life-principle of the new communion. The new communion is a new revelation which appropriates and assimilates to itself the positive truth of the old revelation. Christian theism rests upon Hebrew monotheism as its basis and its necessity ; and may be said to stand in it as the growing trunk in the living root. Appropriating the positive truth living in the Old Testament conception of Jehovah, Christian revelation lifts that positive truth from a lower to a higher plane, creates it anew, and thus transforms it into the final and perfect faith, as the human nature of the chosen people is created anew in the person of the Son of Man and transformed into the absolute ideal of manhood. Monotheism is conserved and perfected in the truth that the Godhead is the absolute spiritual organism ; whilst the force of the new communion and the new revelation appears in the manifestation of the one absolute personal Spirit as Father and Son and Holy Ghost. The *I Am* becomes I, Thou, He.²

3. The Hebrew doctrine of unity is superseded by the Christian doctrine of triunity, the less complete by the more complete revelation of the *one* God. The seed grain, in itself true, good and necessary, passes away for the rea-

¹ John iv. 22.

² Ex. iii. 14; John xv. 26; xvi. 13-15.

son that it has borne fruit after its kind. Hebrew God-consciousness having become Christian God-consciousness ; the latent living energies of Old Testament monotheism having by the historical process of Messianic growth been developed into the perfection of Christian theism ; the former by this consummation takes the position of relative truth, whilst the latter occupies the position of final and absolute truth.

The Old Testament doctrine of Jehovah, when compared with pagan conceptions of Deity, is itself truth ; in itself also it is valid, when considered from the standpoint of the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic economy ; but when the Hebrew conception of one God is asserted to be the final mode of apprehension by way of opposition to Christian faith in one God as Father and Son and Holy Ghost, then the attitude which Hebrew monotheism occupies is not only a perversion of Old Testament monotheistic truth, not only is it superficially interpreted and its teleology ignored, but Hebrew monotheism becomes also false and heretical.

Such an assertion of divine unity would be equivalent to the affirmation that pre-Christian revelation is the final revelation, that the Mosaic economy is the final institute of religion, and that the Hebrew prophets are the final teachers of divine truth. In effect theology would then reassert the Old Testament against the New Testament, Judaism against Christianity, Moses against Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

OLD TESTAMENT ANTICIPATIONS.

§ 82.

As there is a growth in Messianic revelation, so there is a process of development in the Scripture doctrine of God. The pure monotheism of the chosen nation is the rudimentary form of Christian theism. The idea of the triune God is latent in the idea of one God. Old Testament unity foreshadows New Testament triunity.

1. If the Old Testament covenant be Messianic revelation; if Jesus be the Christ, the complete fulfilment of the covenant; if Hebrew monotheism be the living root from which, by a new creative act constituting the Person of the Word made flesh, Christian theism has grown forth; then there must be in the former a type of the latter. The monotheistic principle pervading the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic economy must have lineaments which prefigure and anticipate the richer truth of Christian revelation, somewhat as the remarkable traits of a child indicate and foreshadow the calling of the maturer man.¹ The vi-

¹ Says Dorner: "Wenn . . . der lebendige Gottesbegriff irgendwie trinitarisch gedacht werden musz, so musz zum voraus wahrscheinlich sein, dasz es im alten Bunde an Ansätzen zur Trinität nicht fehle, da sein Gottesbegriff ein lebendiger oder geschichtlicher ist. Erkennt man selbst in heidnischen Religionen, besonders der indischen, schon Spuren der Trinität an, wie sollten sie in der hebräischen ganz vermiszt werden." *Glaubenslehre*, I, p. 331.

tal connection between Christian and pre-Christian revelation suggests and supports this *a priori* presumption.

2. A comparison of Old Testament teaching with pagan monotheistic philosophy at once reveals a wide difference. According to neo-platonism the unity of God is reducible to pure being, $\tau\acute{o} \acute{o}\nu$, the negation of all contents. God is an unfathomable abyss. Of Him no qualities are predicable. The Divine becomes pure abstraction, an ideal point, remote from personality. With this hypothesis all anti-Christological speculation coincides. Hence pagan speculation sooner or later resolves itself into one of its three leading errors. To pagan notions of divine unity Hebrew monotheism is directly antagonistic. Jehovah is not, in the neo-platonic sense, pure being. He has positive contents. He is not absolutely the negation of reality. Though unfathomable essence, there are distinctions in His essence. Though the original unity, Jehovah is not a mathematical unit. He is the *living* One; and the living One is the *personal* One.

3. Jehovah is the living One. He has life in Himself. The title 'living God,' and the formula: "As the Lord liveth," or "as I live," are of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament. For example: "I lift up my hand to the heaven, and say as I live forever."¹ Life implies manifoldness, not singleness; organic unity, not abstract simplicity; activity, not passiveness; self-motion, not quiescence or inertness. Jehovah is self-related life, the one absolute life, or living spirit. This idea of living spirit, or the idea that Jehovah is the living *I Am*, is the rudimentary manifestation of the reality of distinct objective relations subsisting in divine Being. Objective distinctions

¹ Deut. xxxii. 40. "With thee is the fountain of life." Ps. xxxvi. 9.

and relations imply that fulness is predicable of Jehovah, a fulness which is directly contrary to deistic or pantheistic notions of the One.¹

4. The revelation concerning the living One is complemented by the still more eminent principle that Jehovah is the personal One. His self-related life is *self-conscious*. Absolute life is *self-determined*. The objective relations involved in living unity are the relations of divine autonomy, implying a difference in the divine existence of God from Himself. Jehovah is self-objective. "And God said unto Moses, I Am that I Am; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you."² Similar expressions occur in the prophets. "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour."³ Ego, the Hebrew *אני*, is the concrete expression of personality. Personality is the unity of object and subject, of intelligence and will, of thought and freedom.⁴ The distinctions and relations involved in the doctrine concerning the Living One, or organic unity, become thus distinctions and relations existent in the glory of personal Spirit. The life of Jehovah is not impersonal vital force, but the unity of self-related knowledge and sovereignty.

The perception of objective personal fulness appears in the manner in which Jehovah, the one God, is represented by nearly all Old Testament writers. Accordingly I pass

¹ Deut. v. 26; Jos. iii. 10; I Sam. xvii. 26; II Kings xix. 4, 16; Isa. xxxvii. 4; Jer. xxiii. 36; Jer. x. 10; Hosea i. 10; Dan. vi. 26.

² Ex. iii. 14.

³ Isa. xli; 4; xliii. 11, 25; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12; Deut. xxxii. 39.

⁴ On Isaiah xliii. 25: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake," Dorner remarks that God makes Himself as the object of His own activity. "Eine Unterscheidung ist dadurch factisch in Gott gemacht, die mit seiner Einheit zugleich ausgesagt ist." Glaubenslehre, I, p. 232.

on to take a brief survey of Old Testament teaching in its bearing on the triunity of the Godhead.

§ 83.

Prophetic indications of Christian revelation concerning the being of God may be seen: 1. In the names applied to God; 2. In the use of pronouns; 3. In the manner in which God's creative energy and His heavenly benediction are pronounced.

1. The names of God are generally in the plural number. Jehovah is Elohim, אֱלֹהִים. In the beginning Elohim, literally Gods, created the heaven and the earth.¹ It is also worthy of notice that the plural Elohim in Gen. i. 1, is construed with the singular verb, *bara*. Parallel passages are innumerable. In fact the singular form, Eloah, is used only in poetry and late prose. "It is certainly striking," says Delitzsch, "that the singular אֱלֹהִים is unused in prose literature, and that in proper names also there is not a trace of its employment."² The singular is not preferred even when the writer designs in the most solemn manner to assert the oneness of God. Hear, O Israel, Jehovah, our Elohim, (our Gods) is one Jehovah.³ Observe that in this passage we have the plural, Elohim, put in apposition with the singular Jehovah. Jehovah is our Elohim; our Elohim is one Jehovah.

The same peculiarity is observable in regard to the appellative אֲדֹנָי Lord. אֲדֹנָיִם Lords which is generally substituted for the sacred *tetragram*, is a plural with the suffix of the first singular.

The plural form likewise prevails in other names applied

¹ Gen. i. 1.

² Com. on Genesis, I. p. 73

³ Deut. vi. 4.

to Jehovah at later stages of Old Testament history. I cite a few passages "Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him;" literally, let Israel rejoice in his Makers.¹ Again, "for thy Maker is thy husband"; literally, thy Makers are thy husbands.² The plural form occurs in both appellations. Again, "remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth"; literally, remember thy Creators.³ These passages are noted to illustrate a mode of speech common to the Old Testament writers.

2. The sense of self-related distinctions in the being of the Godhead appears in the use of pronouns. The plural is applied to God in the beginning of sacred history. "And God said, let *Us* make man in *Our* image, after *Our* likeness."⁴ The plural number of the personal pronouns *Us* and *Our* implies communion of God with Himself. It is implied also that the constitution of man answers to the idea of the divine fulness. As in man, so in the constitution of God there are different qualities and functions. The being of neither God nor man is a singleness, or a simple force, devoid of organization.

There are other passages in the Book of Genesis of the same import. I note two: "Behold, the man is become as one of *Us*, to know good and evil." "Go to, let *Us* go down and there confound their language."⁵ The plural number of pronouns corresponds to the plural form of the names, Elohim, Adonai, applied to Jehovah.

3. The plural form of names and of pronouns referring to Jehovah are prophetic of the Christian idea of triunity. The latent prophetic force, it may be assumed, was indeed not discernible by the faithful in the dim light of the primal

¹ Ps. cxlix. 2.² Isa. liv. 5.³ Eccl. xii. 1.⁴ Gen. i. 26.⁵ Gen. iii. 22; xi. 7.

promise, or even in the light of the Mosaic economy. The force of the argument drawn from the Old Testament is, however, not thereby weakened. The wholeness of truth respecting Jehovah no less than the wholeness of truth respecting the Messiah was hidden from the eyes of the Old Testament seers, prophets and kings. To them revelation was but the gray dawn of the coming day of sunlight. Richer prophecies were concealed in their words than prophets were able to understand; but when their words are illustrated by Christianity this richer meaning is opened to our view; and we may get a deeper insight into the constitution of the Godhead than was evident to those, though blessed with the Messianic revelation of the covenant, on whom the true light of the world never shone.

The argument drawn from the plural number is designed to show no more than this: that the primary form of supernatural revelation and of human apprehension contains features which, though indistinct, even unintelligible to the people of God during the pre-Christian ages of their history, are nevertheless really typical of the constitution of the Godhead as revealed in Jesus Christ.

4. The truth that God is not a single force but a manifold fulness, is developed by the manner in which the *activity* of Jehovah is pronounced. Take Genesis i. 1-3. 'In the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth. . . . And the Spirit of Elohim moved upon the face of the waters. And Elohim said, Let there be light.' Three distinct moments come to view in this record of God's creating activity, namely, 1, *Elohim*, 2, the *Spirit* of Elohim, and 3, the *Word* of Elohim. The word of Elohim appears in the formula: 'and Elohim said.'

Certainly there are no *personal* distinctions expressed by this sublime language; nor do I presume to infer the

positive force of an argument from the ternary representation. But if we study the ternary representation confronting faith in the first chapter of Genesis from the standpoint of Christianity, especially if we scrutinize the sub-conscious postulates of the trilogy, we may discern in it just that faint manifestation of triune energy which the idea of an objective historical revelation pre-supposes. Either more or less would be unhistorical. More would be premature; less would indicate a non-Messianic manifestation. In the beginning of Messianic history we may detect only faint streaks of the sun of triune truth, but faint streaks are really discernible. Of Genesis it cannot be said that the oldest traditions and the oldest inspired records teach a monotheism wholly wanting in positive sympathy with divine triunity.

The truth underlying the ternary representation in Genesis, was taken up at a later period by the psalmist, and resolved into the following sublime formula: "By the *Word* of *Jehovah* were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath* of His mouth."¹ Three distinct forms of divine agency are asserted: Word, Jehovah, Breath. All being alike active in creation, they articulate more distinctly than the records in Genesis the trinal divine energy.

§ 84.

As the history of Messianic revelation advances, the trinal form of *creative* energy, enters into *cultus* and *worship*.

1. Jehovah commanded Aaron to bless the children of Israel with a trinal benediction: "Jehovah bless thee, and

¹ Ps. xxxiii. 6.

keep thee; Jehovah make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; Jehovah lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace."¹ The benediction is threefold, and the name Jehovah, the peculiar name of the God of Abraham, is to be spoken thrice. The trinal structure of the Aaronic benediction is not accidental. Nor is its structure to be accounted for on subjective grounds, as if the trilogy merely indicated religious habits of the people. The ground of its peculiar structure lies in Messianic revelation; and the trinal structure of Jehovah's revelation is referable to the constitution of the Godhead. The Aaronic benediction typifies the threefold relation of Jehovah to His people, and the threefold mode of the activity of His redeeming love in the first stages of its development. Interpreted in the light of Christianity, the Old Testament benediction is a beautiful prophecy of the New Testament benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."²

2. The trisagion in the vision of Isaiah corresponds to the Aaronic benediction. The prophet saw Jehovah sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is Jehovah Sabaoth: the whole earth is full of His glory."³

Trinal energy in the work of creation becomes a trinal spiritual blessing in the benediction pronounced by Aaron. In like manner, the trinal blessing proceeding from Jehovah to His people becomes a trinal response in the adoration

¹ Num. vi. 22-26.² II Cor. xiii. 14.³ Is. vi. 1-6.

of Jehovah going forth from the seraphim in the temple. Observe the ternary law in the figure and movement of the seraphim. Each one had six wings; and for each seraph the six wings have a threefold action.

The fact is to be noted that the ternary structure of Old Testament revelation is progressive. In the growing fellowship of Jehovah with His covenant people, the original perception of trinality, as faintly indicated by the plural number of divine names, and as wrought into the record of creative activity, passes into an indefinite *conception* of trinality; but the conception is not an inactive or silent image of the soul. It is of the nature of a congenial moulding power, a divine energy in religious life. The perception of trinal force in creation becomes an ascription of trinality to Jehovah Himself. Trinality is more distinct, more objective, more divine, as from age to age Messianic history moves onward.

First, the triune life of Jehovah is manifested in His outgoing from the eternal realm of His glory, His activity *ad extra*; an outgoing which is twofold, the one in creation, the other in gracious benediction, or in the mundane economy and in His heavenly fellowship. Then, having by His fellowship with His people and by His benediction, quickened their religious life into active response, the world and His Church, that is, nature as symbolized by the seraphim joining in the worship of the Church, return to Him in profound adoration, ascribing the manifested trinal energy to its original ground, Jehovah Himself: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts. The trinal law discernible in the Hebrew intuition of Deity and in Hebrew cultus reaches in the trisagion of the seraphim the climax of its manifestation.

§ 85.

The result of this brief inquiry sustains the position that, so far from contradicting divine trinality, Hebrew monotheism has contents which qualify it to be the historical basis of the Christian revelation.

There are two methods of interpreting the Scriptures of the Old Testament relatively to the constitution of the Godhead, which are seriously defective. The one, overlooking the generic superiority of Christianity, endeavors to find in the Old Testament declarations plainly teaching the threefold constitution of God; whilst the other method, overlooking the unity of the two economies, fails to discern the whole truth taught by the pre-Christian volume.

1. Jehovah is objective fulness. Of Him distinctions are freely predicated, distinctions which, being attributed to His transcendent existence, foreshadow the Christian revelation of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The transition from the one to the other, from the unity of Hebrew monotheism to the triunity of Christian faith, is organic and logical. No violence is done to the God-consciousness of the inner circle of the chosen people who move on the highest plane of spiritual fellowship with Jehovah; instead, the transition from unity to triunity is self-consistent development. As the Seed of the woman became the Seed of Abraham; as the Seed of Abraham became a Prophet like unto Moses; as the Prophet became the Son of David; and the Son of David became the Word made flesh; so by a like process, including both normal growth and new acts of revelation, does the Jehovah of the pre-Christian economy become the Father, Son and Holy Spirit of the Christian Church.

The one false method of interpreting the books of the

Old Testament fails to discern the generic difference between Moses and Christ, between the preliminary and the final revelation. Assuming that the two volumes move on the same plane of inspiration, theologians look for direct teaching concerning tri-personality in the Old Testament books. And they proceed to force an argument from all available passages in support of the Christian truth. The other method ignores the vital connection between the two economies, and proceeds on the opposite assumption that in the revelation recorded by the Old Testament writers, there is no adumbration whatever of triunity. Then a similar kind of violence is done to the words and the imagery of pre-Christian Scriptures by an endeavor to minimize the profound meaning of its teaching and to support a denial of that mysterious fulness which, contrary to pagan speculations, the Jehovah-doctrine undoubtedly possesses. Both are without warrant from the Christian faith. In either case, the Christian doctrine of the triune God becomes somewhat magical, and so far forth its foundations in pre-Christian revelation are undermined.

2. For divine triunity there can be no stronger pre-Christian argument than just that obscure typification and growing adumbration of the idea which the development of Hebrew monotheism, as reflected in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, furnishes. The Hebrew God-idea became in process of time the necessity for another epoch in divine revelation; an epoch that goes beyond the Hebrew idea. Just as the demands of the growing Messianic hope could be met in no other way than by the Advent of the Son of God in the person of Jesus, so the legitimate demands of faith in the one God could not be fulfilled in any other way than by the self-manifestation of God the Father in the Son by the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER VIII.

FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT: ECONOMIC TRIUNITY:
ONE IN THREE.

§ 86.

The Christian doctrine of God sustains a twofold relation to all pre-Christian theistic conceptions. On the one hand, it contains the truth which they, each and all, assert, reproduces this truth and fulfils it; on the other hand, the Christian doctrine supplements their deficiencies; and both phases of this relation come to prevail by the force of a new principle. Or, we may express the attitude of the Christian doctrine toward all antecedent conceptions by saying that it performs a threefold function: first, the Christian idea affirms the truths of native intuition and of Hebrew monotheism; secondly, it negates the errors of all pagan conceptions and supplies the deficiencies of the Jehovah-conception; thirdly, it does both by affirming the new truth that the one God is Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

I. The truth of Messianic theism in contrast with the errors of polytheism is this, that the living God, the Creator of all things, is *one* God, not many gods. Confounding the divine essence with divine powers and merging the spiritual in the material, or personifying natural agencies and investing them with supernatural qualities, paganism fills heaven and earth with innumerable finite deities. Assuming the truth of intuitive belief in divine existence, the Hebrew Religion and Christianity maintain thorough-

going opposition to paganism by consistently affirming the absolute unity of the Godhead.¹

2. That the one God is *personal* Spirit, living in the transcendent realm, is the truth of Christianity in contrast with the fundamental principle of *pantheism*. Denying personality of the Divine, this system ever identifies, under one of several forms, the God-idea with the impersonal unity of the world. Christian doctrine uniformly affirms the distinction and qualitative difference between God and nature, between God and man.

3. The one God who is personal Spirit, existing in the transcendent realm of His own glory, is at the same time *immanent* in nature and in man. This is the truth of Christian doctrine in contrast with the *deistic* conception. Separating the Creator from His creation, separating man and nature from God, by an infinite and impassable gulf, deism gives the universe, or the kingdom of nature including man, a self-related autonomy; the two spheres, earth and heaven, the world and God, being each inaccessible to the other, both intellectually and ethically. God is the indifferent spectator of men and things throughout the universe. According to Christianity there is between God and the world no gulf of separation. God and nature are in sympathy, God and man in affinity. Man is the divine temple, nature the outer court.

4. That the one personal Spirit is the *absolute* God, the Author of all classes of existence, material and spiritual, supernal and infernal, is the truth in contrast with *dualism*, which with various modifications affirms an independent principle of evil co-existing with the original principle of good. The one personal Spirit is the only Author of all

¹ Ex. iii. 14; Deut. vi. 4; I. Cor. viii. 6; Eph. iv. 6; Gal. iii. 20.

existent things; He governs all realms, the realm of evil no less than of good, with reference to the ultimate end of His kingdom; moral evil being referred to the false action of personal freedom.

5. That the one, personal, absolute God is *holy* and righteous, is the ethical truth of Christian doctrine in contrast with the immorality and wickedness of pagan divinities. Whether pantheistic or deistic, ethnic religions invest divine beings with the selfishness and corrupt passions of men. "All deities are envious," says Herodotus. But the nature of divine Being as revealed both in the God of Abraham and in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is absolutely separated from every species of wrong; He asserts and realizes in Himself the highest ideal of righteousness and wisdom.

6. The one holy God is the God of absolute *love*. This aspect of the truth forms the contrast to all forms of fatalism. Ignoring man's God-likeness, fate invests the supreme Power with blind, arbitrary sovereignty. Fate governs heaven and earth according to the capricious determinations of almighty will, regardless of natural law or human law. The God of Christianity takes men into most intimate personal fellowship with Himself; He governs man according to the autonomy of man, and governs the universe according to the laws and the conditions of the universe.

7. These distinctive moments; unity, personality, (anti-pantheistic transcendence and anti-deistic immanence,) absoluteness, holiness, righteousness, wisdom and love, characterize the idea of the Godhead common to the Christian and pre-Christian economies. As regards each of these moments there is indeed a difference between Hebrew monotheism and Christianity; but the difference is

only relative. In the Christian economy divine perfections are unfolded with greater definiteness, fulness and harmony, because they appear in their unity under the form of an ideal personal history. But as regards the metaphysical and ethical qualities of the one God, the contrast between the conceptions developed from native intuition and the ideas of Messianic revelation is thorough and complete in the pre-Christian no less than in the Christian econ-

§ 87.

The difference between Hebrew monotheism and the Christian God-idea comes to view in a new manifestation of *divine unity*. God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.¹ The covenant-God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob manifests Himself, not by theophanies, not by Moses, not by the law written on tables of stone, not by the shekinah and the ceremonial system, not by the words of prophets, but in the person of His only begotten Son. This new mystery, the Word made flesh, constitutes the culmination of the development of Hebrew monotheism, the living transition from the old to the new status of Messianic revelation, therefore the transition from the Hebrew to the Christian idea of divine unity. Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Jesus is the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

I. The Christ-idea involves a threefold manifestation of divine unity, and this threefold manifestation is refer-

¹ Heb. i. 1-3.

able to a corresponding threefold distinction in the essence of the Godhead.

Christian Dogmatics contemplates divine unity under two aspects: 1, after the manner in which God manifests Himself, by the mediatorial work of Jesus, the Christ; and 2, as God exists in the objective sphere of His own glory.

Under the first aspect God is the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. God manifests Himself, and so He becomes known to Christian believers, under three distinct characters. God is One in Three. The truth concerning the constitution of the Godhead revealed after this threefold manner has been called the economic trinity, or unity in trinity.

Contemplating the one God under the second aspect, theological thought discerns in the divine constitution the ground of the distinctions manifested by the mediatorship of Jesus Christ. The difference between Father, Son and Spirit seen in Christian revelation is affirmed to be a difference in the mode of eternal divine existence. The three modes of manifestation answer to three modes of the essence of absolute unity. He who is One in Three is also Three in One. The divine constitution necessitates the threefold character of divine manifestation. This truth concerning objective personal distinctions in the nature of God as self-related, studied from the data of revelation, has been called the ontologic trinity, or trinity in unity.

2. The distinction to be made between the mode of divine *manifestation* and the mode of divine *existence* is of fundamental importance; it has from the earliest ages been rendered necessary no less by the requirements of logical thought than by anti-Christian and anti-scriptural teaching on divine unity. In opposition to every false construction of

threefold manifestation, in opposition also to all Jewish and pagan notions of unity, the church was constrained by Christian logic to affirm that the being of God corresponds to the revelation of Himself by His only begotten Son. As there are not two Gods, so there are not two trinities. But as rational thought cannot do otherwise than distinguish between God, objectively considered, and the manifestation of Himself, so in theological science the distinction between threefold divine manifestation and threefold subsistence of divine Being is legitimate and logically unavoidable.

3. The revelation of God in the person of His Son is a unitrinal revelation. The unity of God is manifested in three different characters: Father, Son and Spirit. Each occupies a position peculiar to Himself; each performs a function in the new creation different from the others, whilst nevertheless the position and function of each presupposes the position and function of the others as members of an organic whole.

I shall endeavor to develop the distinction and difference of each mode of revelation from the other two modes in their organic unity.

I. GOD THE FATHER.

§ 88.

The Father is distinct from the Son and the Spirit, distinct in revelation and in redemption; and in both the Father is distinguished negatively and positively.

Negatively considered, the Father is not begotten, nor does He proceed forth from Himself. He does not reveal Himself immediately, nor does God in the person of the Father accomplish any part of the work of redemption.

Positively considered, the Father is God, and God only. In His personal distinction from the Son and the Spirit no other predicate is admissible. Of the Father the Son is begotten. From the Father the Holy Ghost proceeds. In His relation through the Son to mankind, the Father 'loves the world,' but His 'wrath abideth on him that obeyeth not the Son.'¹

1. As distinguished from the Son, the Father is unbegotten. The evidence of the truth of this negative proposition is itself negative. It consists in the silence of all the books of the New Testament. There is not a passage nor a word that teaches, or pre-supposes, or implies that the Father is of another, as the Son is of Him. But everywhere the Son is spoken of as the begotten One, the only begotten One, the only begotten of the Father. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."² Agreeably to this cardinal teaching, as also in many other passages,³ the Son is begotten of the Father, the Father as Father being the begetting principle in the constitution of the Godhead.

2. Of the Father procession is also to be denied. As distinguished from the Spirit, the Father does not go forth from Himself. The argument in support of this negation is itself negative—the entire silence of Scripture. There is in the New Testament neither a passage, nor a word, that either pre-supposes or implies that the Father proceeds from another, or is sent by another, in the sense in which the Spirit proceeds or is sent. On the contrary, the Father

¹ John iii. 36.

John : 14

² John i. 18; Matt. iii. 17; Mark i. 11; Luke iii. 22; John iii. 16, 18.

is by the entire economy of Christianity revealed to be the Person by whom the Son is given, and from whom the Spirit proceeds. The Father gives His Son, not Himself.¹ The Father promises the Spirit, and on the day of Pentecost He pours forth the Spirit;² but He neither promises Himself, nor pours forth Himself. The love and activity of the Father *ad extra*, as set forth in the New Testament, is at all points of revelation mediated by the Son through the Spirit.

3. Begetting, but Himself unbegotten; giving the Son, but not Himself, for the redemption of the world; sending the Spirit, but Himself not proceeding forth *ad extra*; the Father living within Himself is as the Father unknown; for, as our Lord teaches, no one knoweth who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.³ Himself absolute light, He does not of Himself, as contradistinguished from the Son, shine forth into creation. "No man hath seen God at any time."⁴ "Whom no man hath seen nor can see."⁵ Here again the argument is mainly negative. In the Old Testament the self-manifestation of the Godhead is not ascribed directly to Jehovah, but to His *Presence*, His *Face*,⁶ *Maleach*, the *Shekinah*,⁷ to His Prophets who speak in His name, and to One who is to come. In the New Testament revelation is uniformly predicated of the Son. Particular places cannot here be cited. Conformably to this uniform distinction between the Son and the Father, the incarnation in Jesus of Nazareth, is not an incarnation of God in the person of

¹ John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32; John xvi. 28.

² Acts ii. 14-36. ³ Luke x. 22. ⁴ John i. 18.

⁵ I Tim. vi. 16; John v. 37; Ex. xxxiii. 20.

⁶ Ex. xxxiii. 14; I Kings xix. 11-13.

⁷ Gen. xxiv. 40; Ex. xxxiii. 1-3.

the Father, but of God in the person of His only begotten Son.¹

4. As the Father does not become incarnate, so neither is God in the person of the Father the Redeemer. The Father is not born of a woman, born under the law. He does not bear the sin of the world, nor offer Himself on the cross, nor rise from the dead, nor regenerate men. Whenever specific facts in the actual work of redemption are predicated of God, they are not predicated of the trinitarian person of the Father, but of God in the person of His Son.

5. These several negations pre-suppose the positive truth concerning the personality of the Father in His distinction from the Son. The Father is God, *ὁ θεός*. To Him pre-eminently, perhaps exclusively, this distinguishing divine title is applied, not to the Son as Son, nor directly to the Spirit as Spirit. A possible exception occurs in Rom. ix. 5; the best commentators are divided.² Whilst the Son reveals the Godhead, becomes incarnate, and redeems the world; whilst the Spirit broods over chaos, and is sent forth as the Comforter and Sanctifier of believers; the Father is not immediately related either to nature or to mankind. Therefore we have to predicate of Him distinctively and preëminently only this: that He is

¹ Dörner says: "Es ist des Vater's Eigenthümlichkeit, *nur* Gott zu sein, nicht menschlich zu werden, nicht auch ein geschichtliches, wie das *πνεῦμα* und das göttliche in Christus." Glaubenslehre, I, 338.

² Heb. i. 8: 'Thy throne, O God,' being a citation from Ps. xlv. 6, cannot be construed to be the equivalent of *ὁ θεός*, as if directly applied to Christ by the author of the Epistle; Cf. Tit. ii. 13. As to Rom. ix. 5, it may be said to be an open question whether *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός ἐὺλογητός* is to be put in apposition to *ὁ χριστός* or to be taken as a doxology. Meyer, after an exhaustive inquiry into the argument on both sides, supports the doxological interpretation; but his conclusion hinges mainly on the fact that nowhere else is the title *ὁ θεός* applied to Christ.

God. In the organism of the divine existence the Father occupies the position of priority. The Son and the Spirit are both of the Father, but the Father is not of either. Says Richard Hooker: "Seeing therefore the Father is of none, the Son is of the Father and the Spirit is of both, they are by these their several properties really distinguishable each from the other."¹

6. Relatively to the Son the Father is the begetting principle of the Godhead. Relatively to the Spirit the Father is the source of His procession. Hence for the Son the Father is the ultimate authority,² and for the Spirit He is the original fulness whence spiritual gifts come. As to His position of priority the Scriptures are throughout self-consistent. There is no interchange of the office of the Father with the office of the Spirit or with the office of the Son. When Jesus speaks of sending the Comforter, He says: "Whom I will send unto you from the Father."³ Jesus is the mediator in and through whom the Father sends the Spirit.

II. GOD THE SON.

§ 89.

Whilst the Father sustains immediate relations only *ad intra*, that is, only to the Son and to the Spirit, the Son in distinction from the Father sustains a two-fold immediate relation. Like the Father the Son has an immediate relation to the Godhead or *ad intra*, and unlike the Father an immediate relation also *ad extra*, to the world. The Son is the revealing principle of the divine existence. He is the organ of creation. In

¹ Ecc. Pol. v. 51.

² Matt. xxvi. 39, 42, 44.

³ John xv. 26; xiv. 16.

Him God is incarnate. In Him God redeems our fallen race. In the person of the Son God is the Alpha and Omega of the natural and of the spiritual creation, of redemption and providence.

1. In His immediate relation *ad intra* the Son is the image of the Father. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."¹ Says Paul: "Who is the image of the invisible God."² The life of the Father is given to the Son. "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself."³ The life of the Father and the life of the Son are identical; but the order is from the Father to the Son; never from the Son to the Father. It would be unchristian and untheological to say: for as the Son hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Father to have life in Himself.

In respect of authority and power, the same relation of divine dependence subsists. Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.⁴ The power of both and the work of both are commensurate; but of Himself the Son can do nothing.⁵ The relation is immediate; life and power are co-equal; but the function of each relatively to the other is different. We may not reverse the proposition, and say: the Father can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Son doing; for what things soever the Son doeth, these the Father also doeth in like manner. Such reversal of the proposition would contravene the whole tenor of the New Testament. The same relative position comes to view respecting the divine pre-

¹ John xiv. 9; xii. 45.

² Col. i. 15; II Cor. iv. 4.

³ John v. 26.

⁴ John v. 19.

⁵ "I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is righteous, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." John v. 30, Cf. John xii. 49

rogative of honor, and the authority to execute judgment. The same for the Son as for the Father, yet the order is from the Father to the Son. To the Son the Father hath committed all judgment; therefore all men are bound to honor the Son even as they honor the Father.¹ To say: Neither doeth the Son judge any man, but he hath committed all judgment unto the Father; that all may honor the Father as they honor the Son,—would be a direct inversion of Christian teaching. Father and Son exist on the same transcendent plane. The two are distinct, and the connection is reciprocally divine; whilst of the Father priority, and of the Son dependence, are under all aspects of manifestation predicated.

2. Related immediately to the Father, the Son is the Organ of creation. All things are of the Father; but of the Father through the Son.² It cannot be said that all things are of the Son through the Father. This assumption would directly contradict the theology of the New Testament. St. John teaches that all things were made by the Logos, and without Him was not any thing made that hath been made.³ Not anything hath been made by the Father. The Son, according to Paul, is the Archetype, the Organ, and the End of all things; nevertheless, the Son Himself exists before the world;⁴ yet not of Himself, but of the Father; being “the first-born of every creature,” that is, begotten of the Father before all creation.⁵

¹ John v. 21–24.

² “To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him.” I Cor. viii. 6.

³ John i. 1–3.

⁴ Col. i. 16, 17.

⁵ Cf. Nicene Creed, which says: “Begotten of the Father before all worlds.”

3. As of the natural creation so of the spiritual creation, the Son is the Principle. The *Word* was made flesh ; not God in His character of distinction from the Word. Not God in the character of Father, emptying Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men , but the Son. The Son incarnate, the Word made flesh, being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death.¹ Hence it is He, not the Father, who is the light of the world ;² the Son declares God , no one knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him. It follows that the knowledge of the Son conditions all right knowledge of the Father.³

4. The incarnate Son is the Redeemer of the world. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son.⁴ This is the keynote of the New Testament. The passages which teach that Jesus, the Christ, the incarnate Son, gave Himself for our sins; that He is the Lamb of God which beareth the sin of the world that He gave Himself to be a propitiation for our sins , that He died the just for the unjust , and that we have redemption through His blood, are so numerous that at this point it is not necessary formally to quote them. Passages of like import are found, without exception, in all the books of the New Testament. And it is deserving of special notice that, though such passages are so numerous, though the aspects and relations in which this central truth of redemption is taught and enforced are endlessly various, yet the position of the Son as begotten of the Father, as sent by the Father, as fulfilling the Father's will, as revealing His love and declaring His glory, is everywhere affirmed or implied with complete self-consistency. There is no confusion of thought in any

¹ Phil. ii. 5-8.

John viii. 12, xii. 46.

² John xiv. 6; xvi. 15; Matt. xi. 27.

³ John iii. 16; I John v. 12.

evangelist or apostle. Instead, all this manifold teaching concerning God and Christ is the representation of the central idea that the Son is of the Father, obeys the Father, and displays the Father's love and power and wisdom, to the end that when all things shall be subdued unto the Son, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.¹ Nowhere is there one word of teaching to the effect that any part of the actual work of redemption involves God in the character of Father, or that the Father is subject to the Son, or that the Father humbled Himself, or was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to the glory of God the Son. It is the cardinal feature of Christianity that Jesus, the Christ, not God the Father, came into the world to save sinners, and that God was in Christ the incarnate Son, reconciling the world unto Himself.²

5. Christianity as taught by the New Testament is distinguished by this peculiar idea, that whilst the Son of God, in personal character distinct from God the Father, sustains an immediate divine relation to the Being of the Godhead, He at the same time, in contradistinction from the Father, is the principle of the universe, being immediately connected with finite things, and even that He enters into the domain of moral evil to the end that the creation, culminating in man, may be delivered from evil, and in fulfilment of the original divine world-scheme be perfected according to the eternal will of God the Father.³

This distinction between Father and Son is so definite, and so broad, that it is equivalent to an eternal difference of position and of function in the constitution of the Godhead. He who says: I came forth from the Father and am

¹ I Cor. xv. 27, 28.

² I Cor. i. 30; II Cor. v. 20, 21.

³ Gal. i. 4; Rom. viii. 21.

come into the world, declares of Himself: I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. The Archetype of all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, He, the incarnate Son, is the One for whom all things were created, and in whom the universal whole, the old creation, complemented and perfected by the new creation, consists.

III. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

§ 90.

The position and function of the Spirit in the economy of creation and in the kingdom of grace differ from the position and function of the Son and of the Father.

Neither begetting nor begotten, neither conceived nor incarnate, neither the ultimate end of the universe nor performing the actual work of redemption, the Spirit in His character of distinction from the Father and from the Son is the condition of finality and perfection.

The Spirit is the formative and glorifying principle in the process of creation, in the movement and growth of the universe, in the mystery of the incarnation, in the redemption of the world, in the history, the government and the final consummation of the Church.

The being and counsel of God the Father, revealed and accomplished by God the Son, is fulfilled by God the Holy Spirit.

I. The negative aspect of the foregoing general propositions is warranted, not by any direct theological teaching of the Scriptures, but by the total absence of any teaching that supports a contrary judgment. The begetting principle is by implication referred exclusively to the Father;

the property of being begotten is predicated exclusively of the Son. God in the character of Son, that is, the Son of God in contradistinction from the Father and the Spirit, is the Person who by conception and birth is 'born of a woman.' And of Jesus, the God-man, alone is predicated the redemptive work, the victory over the kingdom of darkness, the headship over all things, and the authority of final judgment. Like the Father, the Spirit does not become flesh, nor is the Spirit the Redeemer, nor is He the Alpha and Omega of creation and providence.

Viewed under its negative aspect, the property of the Holy Spirit in His relation to the Godhead and to the world is accordingly this: that the predicates, or the position and function, belonging respectively to the Father and the Son, are not referable to the Holy Spirit. Agreeably to the New Testament, sound theological doctrine concerning the Spirit is required definitely and consistently to observe this negative difference.

2. Yet the position and function of the Holy Spirit is not divorced either from the Son or from the Father. On the contrary, the reciprocal relation of the Father and the Son in the work of creation and of redemption, pre-supposes and anticipates the Spirit. The Spirit is He by whom chaos was fashioned into cosmos;¹ by whom the covenant with Abraham, developed into the Mosaic economy, became possible, was sustained, and was fulfilled.

God 'breathed' into the nostrils of the man He had formed of the dust of the ground, and man became 'a living soul.'² The Only-Begotten of the Father was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and by this conception He took on Him the very nature of man, 'of the flesh and blood of the

¹ "By His Spirit the heavens are garnished." Job xxvi. 13.

² Gen. ii. 7.

Virgin Mary.'¹ At all points in the personal history of our Lord, performing the work of redemption, the Spirit is the mediating agency; and of His mediating agency the conception of Jesus, or the function of the Spirit in His conception, is the type. Said the angel to the Virgin: the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called Holy, the Son of God.² The generative overshadowing of the Holy Ghost conditions the human birth of the Son of God. A like function of the Spirit is evident at our Lord's baptism. Jesus was baptized of John; the words: Thou art My beloved Son, proceed from the Father, whilst the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, whereby the Son by God the Father was sealed.³ The record of the baptism of Jesus and of His miraculous conception exhibits a function of the Spirit in the personal history of the Mediator which is constant.

3. As by the inbreathing of God man became a living soul; as by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit the Son of God was born of a woman, so by the Spirit Jesus was led up into the wilderness to be tempted; by the Spirit He was victorious in His temptation; by the Spirit He wrought His miracles; He lived a sinless life; He offered Himself without spot to God; and He was raised from the dead.⁴ Sinless sufferings, the atoning sacrifice, and the victory over him that had the power of death, are consistently predicated of the incarnate Son; never of the Holy Spirit, never of the Person of the Father. The pres-

¹ Heb. ii. 14; Heid. Cm. 35.

² Luke i. 35; Matt. i. 18, 20.

³ Luke iii. 22; Matt. iii. 16; John vi. 27.

⁴ Luke xi. 20; Matt. xii. 28; Heb. ix. 14; Rom. i. 4; Mark i. 12; Rom. viii. 11.

ence and action of the Spirit are ever the mode of the reciprocal communion of the Son with the Father. Every where the Spirit is represented as the agency through whom the Redeemer perfects Himself, and perfects His mediatorial work. As the *source* of the wisdom and power of the sin-destroying and sin-conquering work referable to the Son is in the Father, so the immanence of the Spirit is at every epoch from the beginning to the close of the mediatorial work on earth the condition of its accomplishment.

4. The medium of heavenly strength to the Redeemer, the condition of an accomplished redemption, the Holy Spirit by virtue of His immanence and His mediating functions becomes the gift of the ascended God-man, the ripe fruit of His perfected mediatorship, the promise of the Father sent by the Son, in and through whom by His miraculous advent on the day of Pentecost the Church of Christ is constituted. As His presence and constant action ~~was~~ the condition of eternal life and the redemption from sin realized in the Son of Man, so the mysterious presence and action of the same Spirit sent forth, and ever proceeding from the Son of Man glorified in heaven are the medium and condition of the regeneration and personal salvation from sin of believers.

In these respects the teaching of the gospels and epistles is uniform. The new birth is ever ascribed to the Holy Spirit.¹ To the Spirit also belongs the work of personal purification. All spiritual phenomena, repentance, faith, the charisms, the distinctive qualities of personal Christian life, as also the constant indwelling and communion of Christ in heaven with His people on earth, from which communion the peculiar qualities of Christian char-

¹ John iii. 5.

acter proceed, are predicated of the Spirit.¹ He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us.² We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, but we wait through the Spirit.³ By the Spirit of adoption believers cry, Abba, Father.⁴ Believers live in the Spirit; walk in the Spirit; are led of the Spirit; pray in the Spirit;⁵ and God who by His Spirit raised up Christ from the dead shall also by His Spirit quicken our mortal bodies.

In the organism of the church and in the history of individual believers the Spirit performs a function which is specifically His own. By the New Testament this function is never ascribed either to the Son or to the Father,—a function which is sometimes expressed by the dative case, *πνεύματι*, as in Gal. v. 5; v. 16; v. 25; sometimes by the preposition *ἐν* with the dative, *ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι*, as in Eph. ii. 18; or *ἐν πνεύματι*, as in ii. 22; Jude i. 20; I Cor. xii. 9; sometimes by the preposition *διὰ* with the genitive, *διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος*, as in I Cor. xii. 8, and in Rom viii. 11. But however the phases of relation expressed by different cases and different prepositions may vary, the Spirit always comes to view as the organ of communication and communion between the Father and the Son, between the divine and the human in the personal history of Christ, between Christ glorified and the members of His body, and also between Christ's members themselves.

5. The distinctive function of the Holy Spirit, as under its manifold aspects it has now been described, implies that He is the glorifier, the divine agent of glorification. That is to say, by His immanent plastic activity He unfolds and brings forth into realization and progressively to complete manifestation, the divine idea of the kingdoms of the uni-

¹ I Cor. xii.² John xvi. 14, 15.³ Gal. v. 5.⁴ Gal. iv. 6.⁵ Gal. v. 22, 26; Rom. viii. 14, 17, 26, 27.

verse, the natural and ethical, human and angelic; but especially He begets and fulfils the union of the heavenly and the earthly, of the divine and the human, in the Messianic kingdom. Says Dr. Matheson: "The power that has garnished the heavens is the Spirit of Him whose many members constitute one body."¹ In all realms, from the lowest to the highest, possibilities through Him become realities, and realities become the essence and beauty of perfection.

The glorifying function of the Holy Spirit pertains to the kingdom of nature, but as represented by Scripture pertains chiefly to the kingdom of grace. The Spirit is the internal condition and the indispensable environment of the progressive history of revelation addressing us through the books of the Old Testament. The glorifying function is more conspicuous in the relation sustained by the Spirit to the incarnate Son and the kingdom of which the incarnate Son is the Head. Says our Lord of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth: He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.² The Father glorifies the Son through the Spirit; and through the Spirit the Son glorifies the Father.³ The Father is the original fountain of the life of love in His Son. The Son asserts the life of love which He has in Himself, revealing its essence in His mediatorial work. The Spirit is the union and reciprocal communion of the Son and the Father.

The glorifier of the Son of Man, the Spirit becomes also the glorifier of His body.⁴ Quickened into existence by the advent of the Spirit, the Church is the organism of His presence on earth, wherein as the living bond of union between the glorified Head and the members of His body

¹ *Voices of the Spirit*, p. 40.

² John xvi. 14.

³ John xvii. 1, 4, 5.

⁴ Col. i. 18.

the Spirit develops the image of Christ in individual personality,¹ and the type of a new community. Ever nourishing and fashioning the body of Christ, the Spirit develops its possibilities, from age to age, toward the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.²

As there came the fulness of time for the pre-Christian economy, so through the indwelling agency of the Holy Spirit there is coming for the Christian Church the fulness of time, an epoch when the new community, the bride of the Lamb, will be arrayed in the perfection of spiritual beauty,³ ready to meet the bridegroom at His second coming.

IV. FATHER AND SON AND SPIRIT.

§ 91.

Father and Son and Spirit are in many places represented in conjunction; and in their conjunction the distinct mode of manifestation, or the property, of each is affirmed or implied. Some of these passages it is important to consider.

1. Among the most prominent is the baptismal formula, Matt. xxviii. 19. In His commission to His disciples Christ commands them to baptize the nations *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος*. The Son and the Spirit are distinguished from each other and from the Father; and both are connected with the Father on the same divine plane of existence. The Three constitute the One to whom the nations are by baptism to be conjoined by a new bond.

¹ Heid. Cm. Q. 32, 49, and 51; II Cor. iii. 18.

² Eph. iv. 13.

³ Rev. xix. 7-9.

The presence of the one God in His three-foldness is expressed by the word *name*, τὸ ὄνομα, and Name is related alike to each of the three distinctions.

The formula does not mean : baptizing them into the name of the Father, into the Son, and into the Holy Ghost ; nor does the formula mean : baptizing them into the names of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost ; but Name, in the singular number, τὸ ὄνομα, being in this solemn construction dynamically related by the same law to Father, and Son, and Spirit, affirms the unity and co-equality of the Three. Not that Father and Son and Spirit bear the same name, or that the same name is applied to three divine hypostases, but the one Name is active in three personal modes of existence and fellowship. The full significance of the formula might be expressed thus : baptizing them into the Name of the Father and into the 'Name' of the Son and into the 'Name' of the Holy Ghost.¹ The God to whom men by baptism are consecrated, is not the Father in distinction from the Son and the Spirit ; but the God in whom Father, Son and Spirit,

¹ To his exposition of Matt. xxviii. 19, Meyer appends a note in which he says: " Had Jesus used the words τὰ ὀνόματα instead of τὸ ὄνομα, then, however much He may have intended the names of three distinct persons to be understood, he would still have been liable to be misapprehended, for it might have been supposed that the plural was meant to refer to the *various* names of each separate person. The *singular* points to the *specific name assigned in the text to each of the three respectively*, so that εἰς τὸ ὄνομα is, of course, *to be understood* both before τοῦ υἱοῦ and τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος."

Dorner says: " In der Taufformel steht nicht eine Einheit über den drei Namen da, die sie umfasste, sondern die Taufe, der religiöse Act ist Einer, indem er gleichmässig auf die drei sich bezieht, und es steht auch das erste Glied, der Vater, dem Sohn und Geist coordinirt da." Further on he adds: " Die Ausdrucksweise der Taufformel ist gar nicht dazu angethan, auf das Werk Gottes, sondern auf Gott selbst, den Vater, Sohn, Heiligen Geist, das Hauptgewicht zu legen. Wären mit den

as contradistinguished from men and all created things, constitute one Name.

Triune baptism has an immediate connection in two opposite directions : a connection on the one hand directly with the one Name, and on the other a connection with men, the subjects of Christian redemption. As regards God, triune baptism is a concrete revelation of the metaphysical mode of divine existence ; as regards men it is the ordinance of Christian confession and consecration.

2. Another passage of similar significance is the Pauline benediction, II Cor. xiii. 13. Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ [Χριστοῦ] καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν. Here the order of the distinctions, and the titles are different ; beginning with 'Jesus Christ' the benediction passes to 'God,' and from God to the 'Holy Ghost.' Each has a distinct attribute ; 'grace' is affirmed of Jesus Christ, 'love' affirmed of God, and 'communion' affirmed of the Holy Ghost. But in the common idea of benediction coming from God upon men, the Three are One. Whilst Christ sustains to the Church the peculiar relation of *grace*, and God the relation of *love*, and the Spirit the relation of *communion*, the Three as being the one Name are in the same transcendent sense the perennial source of spiritual good proceeding from the heavenly realm. The heavenly blessing in its wholeness is referable to neither in opposition to or separately from the others, but is referable to the Three, 'Jesus' and 'God' and the 'Spirit,' to each in their difference and their unity. "Life," as Hooker expresses the truth of the benediction,

Worten Vater, Sohn, Geist auch nur Offenbarungen Gottes, nicht so könnten doch diese Offenbarungen nicht als blosse Worte aufgefaßt werden, in denen Gott nicht selbst seine in sich verschiedene Weise." Glaubenslehre I, pp. 336, 337.

"as all other gifts and benefits groweth originally from the Father, and cometh not to us but by the Son, nor by the Son to any of us in particular but through the Spirit."¹

3. There are several places in the gospel according to St. John where the three modes of divine manifestation are united in a single proposition, among others, ch. xiv. 16, 17 ; also xiv. 26 ; xv. 26 ; xvi. 13-15. Of these I select one, John xv. 26: "Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ὁ παράκλητος ὃν ἐγὼ πέμψω ὑμῖν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, ἐκεῖνος μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ. Considered in their bearing on the question in hand, these words present three important aspects of divine truth :

1. The *threefoldness* of revelation ; the Son, who is the speaker ; the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, whose advent is foretold ; and the Father, from whom the Spirit will go forth.

2. The *differentiation*, each of the Three being set forth in His peculiar character of manifestation. The Spirit is ὁ παράκλητος, the Advocate or Comforter, who will be sent unto the disciples, to the end that in them He may testify of Christ. The Son is the sender of the Spirit. Sustaining the relation of obedience to the Son, the Spirit will come because by the Son He is sent. The relation of the Spirit to the Father is that He will proceed from the Father ; and the purpose of procession from the Father is to bear witness in the service of the incarnate Son. From the Father the Spirit proceeds, and by the Son the Spirit is sent, to the same end : to "bear witness of me."

3. The concrete *unity* of three characters. The procession of the Spirit from the Father, and the sending of the Spirit by the Son, and the obedient coming of the Spirit to

¹ Ecc. Pol. Bk. V. lvi. 7.

testify, imply oneness of *will*. Sent by the Son from the Father, the Spirit witnesses, not of Himself, not immediately of the Father, but of the Son by whom God the Father is revealed. This positive harmony and sympathy of different characters in the Messianic kingdom pre-supposes oneness of divine *life*.¹

God accordingly is here represented under three modes of existence, Comforter, Son and Father, each mode bears a distinct character, and the different activities of three characters are members of one supernatural transaction.

4. In the classic chapter on spiritual gifts, I Cor. xii. St. Paul distinguishes and conjoins the trinity of divine manifestation in a way that is analogous to John xv. 26. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, (*τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα*). And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord, (*καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος*). And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all (*καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς θεός*). Instead of Father, Son and Spirit, we have their full equivalents: Spirit, Lord, God. The incarnate Son bears the title of headship and authority which everywhere in the New Testament is ascribed to Him, *Lord*.² The Father receives His distinctive title, *ὁ θεός*.³

Each form of divine manifestation has its own peculiar mark. Of the 'Spirit' the apostle predicates *gifts*-

¹ Respecting the force of John xv. 26, in its bearing on the objective relations of the Holy Spirit to the Father, Otto von Gerlach says: "Here the Holy Spirit is represented as proceeding 'from the Father,' as His own Spirit. The nature of the Spirit of the personal God consists herein, that from eternity He proceeds from the Father; and the revelation of the Spirit corresponding to His nature consists in this, that through the Spirit man enters into the most immediate fellowship with God Himself. In John xv. 26, as in all other expressions which set forth God's revelation, there is at the same time a disclosure to us of His constitution." ² Phil. ii. 11. ³ Gal. i. 1, 3, 4.

(χαρίσματα); of the 'Lord' he predicates *ministrations* (διακονίαι); and of 'God' diversities of *workings*, 'who worketh all things in all' (ἐνεργήματα). The ultimate source of the energy in all things is 'God' the Father; the Mediator or organ in and by whom the fulness of divine good is ministered to us is the Son, the 'Lord;' and He through whom we become possessors of divine blessing, that is, become personally partakers of the ministrations of the Son, is the 'Spirit.'

The idea in I Cor. xii. 4-7, is the same as in II Cor. xiii. 14, the apostolic benediction; but the same characters appear each under a different aspect. There it is the *love* of God, here the *energy*, or the working in all things of that love; there it is the *grace* of the Lord, here the *ministration* of that grace; there the *communion* of the Spirit, here the gifts that become our possession in the communion created and maintained by the Spirit.

5. The most compact construction of words by which unity in trinity is expressed occurs in Eph. ii. 18: ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφοτέροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. The Father and the Spirit are named by their most common titles; the Son is spoken of by the use of the pronoun: 'through Him,' ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ. The pronoun δι' αὐτοῦ, resumes αὐτός of verse 14; and αὐτός refers to "ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ" of verse 13, who is the leading logical subject of the entire context.

The Son in this construction stands first, being set forth as the one Mediator through whom alone *both*, ἀμφοτέροι, Jews and Gentiles, may acceptably approach God. God the Father is He whom both approach, being the final divine Object, as contradistinguished from the Son and the Spirit, with whom Jews and Gentiles must come into fellowship. As **there** is one incarnate Son, and one God the

Father, so there is 'one Spirit' by whose agency believers have access unto the Father through the Son. "The prepositions are aptly chosen to discriminate the respective economical relations of the Persons of the Godhead in our salvation. The end is the glory of the Father unto whom we are brought through Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost."¹

Here we may see expressed in a single short proposition : 1. the unity of God ; 2. God's unity in His three distinct characters of manifestation, or divine unity in divine community ; and 3, each character active in the peculiar function which according to the teaching of all the books of the New Testament each fulfils in the economy of Christian revelation.

§ 92.

The results of the foregoing enquiries into representations of the New Testament concerning God and the different characters of His self-relation, I sum up in several theses, as follows :

1. The one God revealed by Jesus Christ is Father and Son and Holy Ghost. These three divine modes of existence express the unity of the Godhead in its wholeness.

2. The term Father is the mode of manifestation which affirms distinctively the One who is of Himself and in Himself. Unbegotten, He is the begetting principle. Of Him the Son is. Non-proceeding, the Father is the fountain of the Spirit. To the Son and to the Spirit His relation is *immediate*, and immediate only to the Son and Spirit; to the cosmos, the relation of the Father is *mediate*; that is,

¹ Prof. M. B. Riddle, D.D., in Schaff's Com. on the New Testament, III, p. 377.

the relation obtains in the Son by the Spirit. His characteristic title is $\acute{\omicron}$ $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$.

3. The Son is of the Father. Sustaining an immediate relation to the Father and to the Spirit, He becomes the organ of creation and of redemption. Immanent in the Godhead, He has likewise become immanent in the cosmos. Possessing the eternal life of the Father in Himself, He has also an affinity for finite created life; He becomes the fundamental factor in the history of man and in the processes of the cosmos.

4. The Holy Spirit, sent by the Son, goes forth from the Father. The communion of the Father and the Son, the Spirit is He in whom and through whom creation, redemption and providence, or the divine idea of all kingdoms of the universe, are realized and perfected; thus He becomes the glorifier of the Creator and of the creature.

5. Father and Son and Spirit as represented by the New Testament are personal distinctions in the *unity* of the Godhead. Three characters of one God address us in the revelation and redemption of the Christ. Three divine factors of unitary action in time and space, the distinctions pre-suppose that Father, Son and Spirit have their ground in the constitution of the Godhead; in other words, that the absolute personality is tri-personal unity.

These results are obtained from the study of the New Testament; and obtained by legitimate exegesis, guided only by the analogy of faith; not from dogmatic prepossessions. My aim has been, not to develop the dogma of the Trinity as held by the Church, but to set forth the threefold personal character of one God as this threefoldness is reflected by the concrete development and history of the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER IX.

FATHER AND SON AND HOLY SPIRIT. ONTOLOGIC
TRIUNITY: THREE IN ONE: GOD TRIUNE.

§ 93.

The self-manifestation of God in the threefold character of Father and Son and Holy Ghost declares the trinal constitution of the Godhead. The Christian God-idea is the union of two moments: oneness and threefoldness. Each is essential. Theological error arises when false emphasis is put on threefoldness or on oneness; in other words, when theology fails to discern the truth that God is the absolute spiritual organism. Christian Dogmatics calls for a formula of apprehension that emphasizes unity in threefold manifestation and affirms trinal personal distinctions of unity.

I. The revelation of God by His incarnate Son, is the self-manifestation of *God*; not of divine attributes as distinguished from divine being; not of the divine will relatively to man as distinguished from the absolute divine will; nor of the divine will as distinguished from the divine constitution. God's relative will brings to light the genius of His absolute will; and the absolute will stands in the absolute nature. Divine attributes displayed by the cosmos and immanent in the Messianic kingdom, are founded on objective or metaphysical qualities.

These propositions rest on a positive principle of sound theological thought. God is Truth. He is objectively the personal being that He declares Himself to be *ad extra*. The *manifestation* of Himself answers to *Himself*. By His

providence and in His words He declares Himself to be holy, inasmuch as holiness distinguishes His eternal being. He expresses His will in the command: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, because God is love. Says Whittier:

" By all that He requires of me
I know what He Himself must be."

If God, as to His essence, were not love, the law of love would not be fundamental in the human kingdom, and the command enjoining men to love God and to love one another would have been impossible.

This principle of reasoning is applicable with greatest force to the fundamental divine distinctions that shape the structure of the Christian economy. In the kingdom founded by Jesus Christ appears the personal distinction of Father and Son because Father and Son answer to corresponding personal distinctions in the organism of divine Being. The Holy Spirit is manifested to be the communion of the Father and the Son because from eternity, or in the constitution of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is this communion. Father and Son and Spirit entering into the economy of the new creation answer to Father, Son and Spirit in the absolute personality of the Creator. "The Trinity of History," says Martensen, "has its foundation and roots in the supra-historical Trinity of the divine essence."¹

If we suppose the contrary, or think of God on the principle that He in Himself does not answer to Himself as revealed by Christ, it will follow that we have no valid revelation. The skepticism that calls into question the objective divine triunity, must, if logically consistent, call

¹ Christian Dogmatics, p. 112.

into question divine holiness or divine wisdom, or even the divine existence. If the phenomenal does not declare the noumenal, if the two forms of truth are not organically connected, then the foundations both of theology and of religion crumble to pieces.

Confidence in God's trinal self-manifestation is a guide to thought in the effort to construe trinity in unity. Theology has to think of the distinctions objectively, and of their objective reciprocal relations, according to the relative position and functions of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the history of Christian revelation.¹

2. Unity and trinity are each an essential element of the Christian idea of God. Too much emphasis cannot be consistently put on either; for each pre-supposes the other. Serious error arises when *false* emphasis is put either on unity or on trinity.

False emphasis put on God's unity resolves unity into singleness.² God becomes, to use the language of philos-

¹ Paul says: "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law." Gal. iv. 4. Of this passage Dorner says: "Mit Recht ist erinnert worden, dass Paulus so nur reden könne, wenn er den Sohn als schon irgendwie vor der Sendung existirend dachte; sein Sein geht seiner Geburt von dem Weibe, die zugleich Heraussendung aus Gott ist, voran, und so heisst hier schon das göttliche Princip, das gesendet wird, Sohn. Das wird dann auch bestätigt durch alle die Stellen, welche den, der Sohn heisst, bei der Welschöpfung wirksam setzen." Glaubenslehre, I, p. 342. Gal. iv. 4; John i. 3; Col. i. 16, 17 and similar passages, as interpreted by Dorner, Meyer and others, demonstrate the general 'principle of reasoning' on which we account for the threefold revelation by recognizing a threefold divine constitution.

² Represented in the third century by the *Monarchians*, of whom there were two classes, the one being deistic, led by Theodotus and Artemon, the other pantheistic, led by Praxeas, Noëtas and Beryllus, commonly styled Patripassians. "Origen already distinguishes two classes of Monarchians; the one spoke of Jesus as a *præcognitum et prædestinatum* hominem, while the other class taught the divinity of

ophy, pure being. He becomes that of which nothing can be affirmed except that *it is*. We get the *το ὄν* of the neo-platonic school. Logically it is not even allowable to say of the primal essence: *He is*. The abstract notion of 'pure being' excludes personal distinctions, excludes personal antithesis to man.¹ The tri-personal manifestation is reduced to hollow modal trinality. The essential members of Christian revelation, instead of declaring God, contradict His objective constitution. Revealed to be Father and Son and Holy Spirit, He is in Himself neither. Of His nature no distinctions can be predicated that justify or warrant the trinitarian structure of the Christian economy.

But the process of abstraction cannot pause with the denial of tri-personality. Denial must pass from personal to impersonal distinctions. If the divine be resolved into the single Thing, and if it be rational to predicate of divinity nothing but simple being, we are reduced to the position of agnosticism; and it becomes illogical to affirm that divinity is either good or powerful. Such has been the logical history of anti-trinitarian thought. The firm foothold on the Christian rock of *unity* having been lost,

Christ, but identified the divinity of the Son with that of the Father." Quoted by Hagenbach, Doctrinal History I, p. 131. Cf. Hase's Church History, § 90.

¹ Plotinus, (A. D. 205-270) the most distinguished representative of neo-platonism, gives different names to the primal essence, as "the first," "the one," "the good" and "that which stands above being." With him *being* is "but a conception, which, like the reason, may be resolved into a higher ground." In characterizing the primal essence still farther, "he denies it all thinking and willing, because it needs nothing and can desire nothing; it is not energy, but above energy; life does not belong to it; neither being nor essence nor any of the most general categories of being can be ascribed to it; in short, it is that which can neither be expressed nor thought." History of Philosophy, by Dr. Albert Schweigler, translated by Julius H. Seelye, p. 155.

the currents of negation have carried metaphysical thought from one denial to another until no more positive truth remains to be denied. The formula: *unus in uno* has proved itself to be rationally untenable. Either a reaction toward more positive truth ensues, or it opens the way to universal skepticism.

False emphasis put on trinality, resolves triunity into tritheism.¹ We get three Gods. Unity passes into division and dissipation. Christian theism becomes a species of pagan polytheism. Tritheism contradicts the Christian idea of Deity as truly as the notion of singleness. If thought declare for three Gods there is no God at all ; for the God-idea implies absoluteness and infinitude, metaphysical and ethical. When thought denies that God is the one supreme Personality of whom, by whom, and to whom are all things, it dismisses the idea of the Divine altogether, and is drawn into the atheistic whirlpool.²

The history of Grecian mythology shows that polytheistic belief may have a twofold outcome : thoughtful men will be constrained to return to monotheism, or they will sink into some form of universal negation ; illustrated on the one hand by Socrates and Plato, on the other by the

¹ The theology of the Greek fathers held that the Father was the root and fountain of the *Godhead*, *ῥίζα καὶ πηγὴ πάσης θεότητος*. Here lies the *seed* of tritheism, which developed during the third and fourth centuries into the subordination of the Son to the Father. The Son, not as to sonship, but as to being, was subordinate, an idea that ripened into Arianism. Cf. Dorner's *Dogmatics*, I, pp. 368, 369. Notable instances of tritheism were John Ascunages of Constantinople, and John Philoponus of Alexandria, who applied the ideas of Aristotle to the Trinity. Hase's *Church History*, § 119.

² The trend of thought is commonly pancosmic. Rothe says: "He who thinks of God as in Himself an entirely *simple* being must be strongly tempted to form a pantheistic conception of Him as particularizing Himself in the world." *Still Hours*, p. 108.

Eleatic School.¹ The Mohammedan conception of the Divine, based on the monotheism of the Old Testament, was in one respect a reaction against tritheistic tendencies in the Christian Church of the fourth and fifth centuries ; but the Mohammedan reaction failed to reinstate the truth of Jehovah, the one true God, as taught by the Old Testament. Instead, Allah enthroned the hereditary notion of fate, which sprang up and grew, not in the garden of Hebrew religion, but on the sandy wastes of pagan misbelief.

The Christian doctrine of God aims to avoid error in both directions. Putting false emphasis neither on trinality nor on unity, it seeks to maintain the profoundest idea of unity by affirming the objective distinctions expressed by Father and Son and Holy Spirit. It conserves and establishes unity by positing its essential members, in virtue of which the ideal unit becomes for rational thought the organic One.

Oneness in threefoldness and threefoldness in oneness, or the vital unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is the

¹ Respecting the Good, Plato says in the Republic: "That which imparts truth to the object and knowledge to the subject is what I would have you term the idea of good, and that you will regard as the cause of science and of truth." . . . "The good may be said to be not only the author of knowledge in all things known, but of their being and essence, and yet the good is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power." Rep. VI., 509. "It is difficult to say precisely" says Schwegler, "what relation this idea of the good bore to the Deity in the Platonic view. Taking every thing together, it seems clear that Plato regarded the two as identical; but whether he conceived this highest cause to be a personal being or not is a question which hardly admits of a definite answer." Schwegler's History of Philosophy, by Seelye, p. 96.

"The Eleatics step absolutely beyond that which is given in experience, and make a complete abstraction of every thing material. This abstraction, this negation of all division in space and time, they take as their principle, and call it pure being." Schwegler, by Seelye, p. 18.

living God—God living in the communion of love with Himself. Three in one affirms God to be absolute personality, or the self-existent spiritual organism.

[94.

The self-manifestation of God in the character of Father and Son and Holy Spirit expresses the truth that in the Christian idea of God there are three terms, three life-points. Each term is a unique mode of divine existence, and each implies distinct metaphysical relations.

1. Father and Son and Spirit are each a divine *term*. By the word term I mean that in the constitution of the Godhead the Father lives as Father. The Father is not the Son, nor the Spirit. Of the Son we have to think according to the same law. In the constitution of the Godhead the Son lives as the only begotten Son; not as the Father, not as the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit faith affirms to be, not the Son, not the Father, but other than either. The Holy Spirit, like each of the other terms, expresses a unique distinction. The Christian God-idea postulates these three terms as being the members of the infinite self-existent unity.

In the effort to think rationally of God's existence according to the trinal structure of Christian revelation, the first necessity is to recognize the objective truth of three unique terms. I call the terms unique, because each has a significance peculiar to itself alone; and the three are a triad unlike all other possible divine predicates. No divine quality, power for example, holds a place in distinction from other qualities declared by revelation, such as holiness and justice, like the place held by the *Son* as contradistinguished from the Holy Spirit and the Father.

At this stage of our enquiry it is not necessary to agree on the general name that ought to be given to the contents of these unique terms. The matter of chief importance for theology is to have a definite perception of the fact that the God-idea is, not simplicity or singleness, but that the One is necessarily Three, by whatever name ultimately the distinctions may be denoted. The idea of God does not pre-suppose the inconceivable solitude of an abstract unit, but an ethical communion.

2. Each term is a *mode* of divine existence. The one God lives in these three forms. The Father is a mode of the One that the Son is not, and that the Holy Spirit is not. The Son and the Holy Spirit are each a mode of the One that the Father is not. The position and office of the Son in the objective constitution of the Godhead is as definite and uniform as is the position and office of the Son in the organic structure of Christian revelation. The same thing is to be affirmed of the Holy Spirit and of the Father. There is an eternal modal difference to be predicated of God as He exists of Himself and in Himself.¹ Otherwise Christian revelation, instead of imaging the Godhead, would mislead divine faith and insult logical thought by self-contradictory forms of manifestation. On that assumption revelation would contradict the postulate of reason.

To hold a threefold *mode* of the divine existence is indeed not adequate ; but it is valid and necessary. Error

¹ Sabellianism held the Father, Son, and the Spirit to be modal differences of the manifestation of the Godhead in His activity *ad extra*; not ontological modes of existence of the absolute One. The fundamental thought of Sabellius is, "that the unity of God, without distinction in itself, unfolds or extends itself in the course of the world's development in three different forms and periods of revelation, and after the completion of redemption, returns into unity." Cf. Schaft's Church History, Vol. II. p. 582.

would arise by pausing on this line of thought. Yet modal differences in the idea of divine existence affirm a part of the truth. Different modes of being are correlative to three unique terms.

3. Distinct unique terms involve unique *relations*. Father denotes a mode of divine existence in relation to the Son. Theological thought calls this relation *paternal*. Son denotes a mode of divine existence in relation to the Father. Theological thought calls it *filial*. The Holy Ghost denotes a mode of divine existence that is named by the word *communion*; and communion presumes a threefold organic relationship, wherein each term is itself, yet to be itself each necessitates the existence of the other two terms, each in its own character.

When faith thinks of the Father as Father it postulates the Son. When faith thinks of the Son as Son it postulates the Father. The two terms are correlative. Either without the other faith could not affirm. The paternal relation implies and requires the filial relation. The filial relation implies and requires the paternal relation. Neither the filial relation nor the paternal relation could exist for thought if faith would deny or ignore the positive difference of the terms.

When faith thinks of the unity of the Father and the Son consistently with the positive difference of the Son from the Father, it postulates the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the union and communion. Union and communion complete the idea of fatherhood and sonship. Spirit accordingly affirms a third relation; without it the filial relation would indeed differ from the paternal relation, but the difference would not posit absolute triune life. Spirit as distinguished from the Father and the Son is a necessary member of the God-idea.

There is no better word to express the position and office of the Holy Spirit in the absolute organism of the Godhead than the New Testament word *κοινωνία*, communion.¹ None is better adapted to the purpose and needs of sound theological thought. Communion denotes the Holy Spirit to be a concrete term that implies and necessitates two other terms, each from the other distinct. Ideal divine unity implies the different terms, and the different relations, denoted by Father and Son and Holy Spirit. The unchangeable threefoldness conditions the unchangeable oneness.

§ 95.

If Father, Son and Spirit are three terms, and if three terms involve different complemental relations subsisting in the organism of the Godhead, theology, to attain to the completeness of the God-idea, must pass on to unfold the fuller and more definite import of divine trinality. To think of the position and office of each agreeably to the structure of Christian revelation, thought governed by faith has to pronounce each term an ethical energy, or personal principle.

I. The Son is the only begotten of the Father. Begotten of the Father, the Son is His image. Being His image, the Son is the self-manifestation of the Father. The data which involve these fundamental propositions are given by the person and mediatorship of Jesus Christ.

If the Son is the only begotten One, the Father is the begetting principle. Neither of the Son nor of the Spirit, the Father is of Himself. He is unbegotten.

Between the Father and the Son there is a difference

¹ II Cor. xiii. 13.

of existence which, according to the truth of Christianity, may be expressed by saying, that the Father is begetting and the Son non-begetting, the Father unbegotten and the Son begotten. These propositions assert the eternal attitude and the eternal activity of the Father toward the Son, of the Son toward the Father, in the organism of the Godhead.

Hooker says:

"For the substance of God with this property *to be of none* doth make the Person of the Father; the very self-same substance in number with this property *to be of the Father* maketh the Person of the Son; the same substance having added unto it the property of *proceeding from the other two* maketh the Person of the Holy Ghost. So that in every Person there is implied both the substance of God which is one, and also that property which causeth the same person really and truly to differ from the other two."¹

If we think of Father and Son according to this life-relationship, neither is quiescent, but each is *active* toward the other. Neither is active only, but each is also acted upon. Neither is acted upon only, but each is also receptive. Of each, reciprocal activity is to be affirmed. The Father is active toward the Son. The Son is active toward the Father. Each is active toward the other, and each being receptive is by the other acted upon. This continual reciprocal activity, or each term going forth toward the other, may be described by the word *energy*. Not that the one is identical with the other. The Son as an energy in the organism of the Godhead differs from the energy which the Father is. Each as distinguished from the other is an energy peculiar to Himself.

The Spirit is the oneness of the Father and the Son. The Son is begotten of the Father in the unity of the

¹ Ecc. Pol. Bk. V. li. i.

Spirit. The Father as distinguished from the Son is of Himself, and unbegotten, in the unity of the Spirit.¹ If according to the intuition of Christian faith theological thought affirms the distinct function of the Spirit to be *κοινωνία*, it follows that in the organism of the Godhead the Spirit is a third essential energy; not a passive term, but a life-point; an energy different from the Son, different from the Father; an energy conditioning the paternal activity of the Father and the filial activity of the Son; an energy by whose eternal immanent activity Father and Son are in unity the original and absolute constitution. In the unity of the Spirit as a distinct eternal energy, Father and Son are by their positive difference *one God*.

2. The idea of the triune God revealed by the trinal structure of Christian revelation calls for a more concrete determination of trinality. Three energies in unity, or the *κοινωνία* of Father and Son, involve ethical activity; and ethical activity involves knowledge and wisdom.

The relation subsisting between the Father and the Son is the relation of *love*. The life of God is the life of love. The Father loves the Son as the ethical Object adequate to Himself. The Son loves the Father as the ethical Object adequate to Himself; the love of each is love toward another. Yet the Father loves Himself in His Son, who is His only absolute image. The Son loves Himself in the Father, who is His only archetype. Archetype and image are equal. But the Father is not the Father if thought of apart from the communion of love with the Son. And the Son is not the Son if thought of apart from the communion

¹ Compare the doxology of the collects for the first Sunday after Christmas and the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity: "who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end."

of love with the Father. The ethical difference is a difference in ethical unity.¹

If the Father, the begetting principle, is the Father only in the *communion* of love with the Son; and if the Son, the only begotten One, is the Son only in the *communion* of love with the Father, then the metaphysical difference of the Holy Spirit is affirmed. Neither begotten nor begetting, the Spirit is the principle of the ethical oneness of the Begotten and the Unbegotten. The Father loves the Son in the absolute unity of love. Reciprocal love between the Father and the Son is absolute only in the absolute communion. The ethical *communion*, or the communion of absolute love, is the Spirit. The love of the Spirit is the complemental principle. In the Spirit the idea of love becomes final and complete. The position and function of the Holy Spirit in the organism of the Godhead is peculiar to the Holy Spirit. He differs from the Father as Father;

¹ Dr. Dorner construes the Christian idea of God in a threefold way: metaphysically, logically, ethically. 1. The metaphysical necessity of Three in One is seen in God as the absolute organism. Self-existence is real and positive. Self-grounded, God is likewise Self-produced. Within Himself He is Cause and Effect. Effect and Cause are equal. Effect equalling Cause is itself causative. Self-produced, the absolute organism is also retro-active. This is a universal law of living beings. In every organism there is a principle which is neither the centrifugal nor the centripetal force, nor is it the whole,—a principle “which preserves and confirms the members in their distinction, just as it unites them. This principle of union in the organism of the absolute Life we call the Holy Spirit.” *Trinitas dualitem ad unitatem reducit.* 2. God knows Himself. He is the Object known and the Subject knowing. Of the Father the Son is the perfect image. But the two terms do not stand asunder, as in divine knowledge of the world. As known He is not *mente alienatus*. Of His absolute self-knowledge God is conscious. To know that I know myself is a distinctive principle of man's self-consciousness. The knowing Godhead, inasmuch as He knows His own essence in that which is different from Himself, knows His essence in the Object known,—constitutes His Self-con-

He differs from the Son as Son; and this difference is essential to the Christian idea of the unity of the Godhead.

Dr. Strong's statement is forcible :¹

"The prepositions used to describe the internal relations of the second person to the first are not prepositions of rest, but prepositions of direction and movement. The Trinity, as the organism of Deity, secures a life-movement of the Godhead, a process in which God evermore objectifies Himself and in the Son gives forth of His fulness. Christ represents the centrifugal action of the Deity. But there must be centripetal action also. In the Holy Spirit the movement is completed, and the divine activity and thought returns into itself."

The necessity and the difference of the Spirit in the God-idea we may express negatively. It may be said : if God were not the Son He would not be the Father ; the distinctions being correlative. So it may be said : if God were not the Spirit, and if there were no metaphysical nor ethical difference predicable of the Spirit, the Father and

sciousness. Hence a third and equally real principle of union is necessary, the Holy Spirit, to whom Paul ascribes this exclusive dignity: the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. (I Cor. ii. 11). 3. Construed ethically, the idea of God implies three things: authority, freedom, and realized unification. In the glory of the Godhead the Father is the principle of authority. He is "Das gute Sein," the good as existence. God is goodness because He is in Himself good. The Son is the principle of freedom. Goodness is good because God chooses it. Two things are essential in absolute goodness: unchangeable law and free choice. Though different the two are not alien. Authority loves freedom; freedom loves authority. Each demands the other. This reciprocal demand involves the third principle. By the Holy Spirit as the bond of unity between authority and freedom "the self-volition of the free is eternally effected in the necessary, and that of the necessary in the free," that is to say, absolute, self-conscious, free Love is realized. Love is the union of ethical necessity and freedom. On the one hand, love requires the free consent of will; and, on the other, love chooses the ethically necessary consciously and with absolute delight. The ontology of love thus described forms the conclusion of the process by which God is the absolute Personality. *System of Christian Doctrines*, § 31.

¹ *Systematic Theology* by Prof. A. Hopkins Strong, D. D., p. 163.

the Son would not be the absolute *communion* of love. Theology would affirm two different ethical principles, but no absolute ethical unity. The doctrine of eternal divine love would become unethical and illogical.

3. The communion of love between Father and Son is cognitive and rational. The Father knows the only-begotten Son to be His image, the adequate Object of His love. The Son knows the Father to be His archetype, the adequate Object of His love. In other words, the free out-going of the Father toward the Son is conscious: the Father knows Himself as loving the Son, knows the Son as by Him loved and as in turn loving the Father: the Son knows Himself as loving the Father, knows the Father as by Him loved and as reciprocally loving Himself.

The free out-going of the Father towards the Son is wise: the Son being to the Father the adequate Object of paternal love, He is to the Father eternally the End, the unchangeable Object that satisfies the Father's heart: the Father being to the Son the adequate Object of filial love, He is to the Son eternally the ultimate End, the unchangeable Object that satisfies the filial heart.

Love is free, implying the continual choice of divine will. Love is not blind, but all-knowing. The choice of the divine will terminates on an Object absolutely known; and the eternal choice of will is made in infinite wisdom, the Object unchangeably chosen being the Object that is unchangeably satisfying. The significance of the Trinity, as Dr. Julius Müller expresses it,

"is that God has in Himself the eternal and wholly adequate object of His love independent of all relation to the world." John xvii. 24. "Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world;" see also v. 5. This requires alike the unity of the Essence, and the distinctness of the Per-

sons. For without the distinction of Persons, without an *I* and a *Thou*, there could be no love. Again, without the unity of Essence, there would follow from the love of God a necessary relation to an essence distinct from God. Both are therefore implied in what is said of the Logos in the beginning of St. John's Gospel; the distinction of Persons by the *ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν*; the unity of Essence by the *θεὸς ἦν*.¹

Theological thought here attains to an advanced position. The Christian God-idea includes absolute righteousness. The love of the Father to the Son is worthy of the eternal Father. The love of the Son to the Father is worthy of the only begotten Son. The eternal reciprocal love between Father and Son is infinitely worthy of the Godhead. In this infinite reciprocal worthiness consists the blessedness of God.

4. In affirming eternal reciprocal choices of divine will by which the only begotten Son is the absolutely satisfying Object of the Father's heart, and the Father is the absolutely satisfying Object of the heart of the only begotten Son; also in affirming the reciprocal free action of the will of the Father toward the Son and of the will of the Son toward the Father to be rational, wise and righteous, the necessity and the difference of the Holy Spirit is likewise affirmed. The reciprocity of knowledge and of wisdom is not an abstraction, but ontologically real. If the reciprocal interaction of knowledge and wisdom were a divine notion, an unsubstantial and unreal thing; the terms opposite, the Father loving and loved, the Son loved and loving, by logical consequence would themselves be unreal and unsubstantial; and the God-idea would be dissolved into a Something or a Somewhat intermediate between Personality and Zero. Ethical unity would disappear. Theological thought would react into one or another of pagan alternative conceptions.

¹ The Christian Doctrine of Sin, II p. 136.

But if thought sustains her advancing process in accordance with the position and function of the Holy Spirit in the trinal structure of Christian revelation, she will affirm the Holy Spirit to be real subsistence in predicating real subsistence of the Father and the Son. The divinely ethical posits the third member of the Godhead. So does the divinely logical posit the third member. As mutual love between Father and Son pre-supposes metaphysical *communion*, thus affirming the Spirit to be a metaphysical necessity, so the reciprocal knowledge and reciprocal wisdom of the Father and the Son, affirm the logical necessity of the Spirit.

Absolute reason is the original syllogism. The place and function of the middle term in the rational process of the human soul answers to the place and function of the Holy Spirit in the rational process of absolute thought. The internal conditions of finite knowledge image the eternal conditions of infinite knowledge. As man is formed in the image of God, this analogy is valid. It is also the loftiest and most truthful analogy. When we think of divine Reason according to the categories and laws of human reason, we are thinking of God on principles and after a manner that are like the infinite relations existing in the trinal aseity of the Godhead. In human logic the middle term, different from the major and minor terms, is the unity of both; it is the unity because the opposite notes of the other terms are in it a conception common to them. In concrete divine logic the Spirit is the unity of paternal and of filial knowledge; and this absolute unity of divine knowledge the Spirit is because of His office, distinct from that of the Father, distinct from that of the Son. The self-consciousness and the wisdom of God are absolute because self-consciousness and wisdom are trinal.

5. It becomes theology to unite the lines of thought which have now been pursued.

In the organism of the Godhead the Father is a distinct mode of divine existence. He unites the ethical and the logical. He is a Self in whom wisdom and freedom centre.

The same propositions are applicable to the Son. He is a Self, a living centre of wisdom and freedom. The Father as Father and the Son as Son are each in the divine organism a life-point which is ethico-rational.

When we say that the Father and the Son are each a distinct ethico-rational Self in the unity of the Godhead we express the contents of personality. *Person* is the title that by common consent is applied to a self-objective subject, a subject of whom we predicate unity of will and reason, or the unity of which we predicate freedom and knowledge. In other words, a person is an object-subject. Subject and object are one. As object person is self-embraced, that is, self-determined and self-known ; as subject person is self-embracing, that is, self-determining and self-knowing,—self in the same act is determined and determining, known and knowing. Person immediately affirms himself by the concrete word *ego* or *I* ; person is addressed by the concrete word *thou*, and is spoken of by the word *he*. I, thou, he, are the three concrete forms of speech which mark a unique subject. The subject is unique because self is the subject which is its own object. The subject-*ego* is the object-*ego* ; of the object-subject, the essential qualities are thought and will, vitally and inseparably united. A subject of whom these inseparable qualities are predicable is a self, an autonomy, an *ego* ; and it is only a self, only an *ego*, of which the union of object and subject can be thus predicated.

We distinguish between finite existence and infinite

existence ; so we have to distinguish between finite personality and infinite personality. As man is finite and God infinite, man relative and God absolute, we distinguish between the essential qualities of God and the essential qualities of man. Man's will is like his nature, finite. Man's knowledge is like his existence, relative. Human personality, the vital centre of finite freedom and relative intelligence, is finite and relative personality. God's will is like divine being, infinite. God's knowledge is like His own existence, absolute. In Him infinite being and infinite freedom, absolute reason and absolute knowledge, are one. When we thus think of God we think of Him as the infinite and absolute *Ego*. He is the infinite Self inasmuch as unconditioned autonomy and absolute reason have in Him their vital centre.

The trinal structure of Christian revelation requires us to recognize three distinct modes of objective divine existence, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Pursuing the significance of these three forms of divine life from one point of difference to another, the legitimate process of theological thought reaches its final apex in the affirmation that trinal terms, trinal modes of existence, trinal energies imply and involve each a logical and ethical centre of life. The paternal mode of existence is personal. Of the Father the three unique forms of personal expression, I, Thou, He, are legitimate and essential. The filial mode of existence is personal. Of the Son the same three unique forms of personal expression, I, Thou, He, are legitimate and essential. But the Father and the Son are each a personal mode of divine existence in the unity of the Holy Spirit. If we think of the Father separately from the Son, or think of the Father as not living in the absolute communion of love with the Son, the Father is not a divine

person. The *Father* becomes an impersonal mode of divine manifestation. If we think of the Son separately from the Father, or think of the Son as not living in the absolute communion of love with the Father, the Son is not a divine person. The *Son* becomes an impersonal mode of divine manifestation. Personal sonship is absolutely inseparable from personal fatherhood. Personal difference stands in absolute unity.

When we say that the personal difference stands in absolute unity, theological thought by implication affirms the personality of the Spirit.

The Spirit is the communion of love. The Spirit is the reciprocity of knowledge and the reciprocity of wisdom. This reciprocity of knowledge is not notional, but real. The *communion* of love is not abstract, but concrete. The middle term is concrete and metaphysical as truly as Father and Son. Each is an entity. The unique essential qualities predicable of the Father and the Son likewise distinguish the Spirit. If the Spirit be the ethico-rational union of the opposite terms, Father and Son, He possesses the qualities which we express by the concrete word *ego*; and personality or hypostasis is the proper title by which He is denoted.

Theological thought reaches the final expression of the Christian God-idea when it asserts that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are three hypostatical or personal modes of one objective divine Existence. Divine Being is the absolute spiritual organism in which each of the three members is a personal principle, an *Ego*, a Self.

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Of the Christian God-idea theology must therefore affirm triunity, or oneness in threefoldness, and threefoldness in oneness. If Father and Son and Spirit be each a divine Self, each is personal as possessing the one essence of the Godhead. The Monad of whom we predicate the triad, three different personal modes of objective existence, is the absolute Personality.

1. Theology is required to distinguish between the Godhead of the Father and His fatherhood, between the Godhead of the Son and His sonship, between the Godhead of the Spirit and His spiration or *κοινωνία*. As to the Godhead, the essential nature, of the three distinctions, there is between them no difference.¹ The Son is true God in the sense in which the Father is true God. Father and Son differ by a difference in their identical nature. The Spirit is true God in the same sense in which the Son is God. From the Son and from the Father the Spirit differs by a hypostatic difference, a difference of property in the one indivisible nature of the Godhead. Each Self is dif

¹ Among the ante-Nicene Fathers the doctrine of the Son in relation to the Father was defective. The relations of the Three were thought of under images derived from nature. The Father was related to the Son as the root to the tree, as the fountain to the river, as the sun to a ray of light. Cf. Dionysius the Great, † 265, Ep. to Dionysius bishop of Rome. The Father was the fountain of the Son, not only as Son, but also as God. Says Tertullian: "The Father is the entire substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole." Against Praxeas, Ch. XI. In contradistinction from this principle of subordination, if we recognize the truth that God is the absolute spiritual organism, we have to affirm that the essence of Godhood is the same in the Son and in the Spirit as in the Father. The being of the Son is neither a 'derivation nor a portion of the whole,' but 'the entire substance' of God is predicable of each member of the absolute Organism.

ferentiated by a property, *ιδιότης*, which is His own exclusively; but the differentiation of each pre-supposes oneness and sameness of essence. Says Dr. Dorner:

"The one divine personality is so present in each of the distinctions, that these, which singly and by themselves would not be personal, yet do participate in the one divine personality, each in its own manner. This one divine personality is the unity of the three modes of subsistence which participate in itself. Neither is personal without the others. In each, in its manner, is the whole Godhead."¹

2. A conception of this unfathomable truth of Christian faith theological thought may approach by the help of the noblest analogue. That analogue is the human soul. Emphasis is to be put on the fact that man was created in God's image. The life of humanity is kindred to the spiritual organism of the Godhead. To this truth Christ, the incarnate One, has set His seal. He who was eternally 'in the form of God' was 'found in fashion as a man.'² The fashion of ideal manhood was the most perfect self-manifestation of the invisible Godhead. If we think on divine triunity after the manner in which triunity manifested itself, we follow divine logic. We endeavor to know God by the organic order in which God approaches and addresses human perception.

The human soul is a triune organism. Will and intellect and feeling are distinct endowments; each possessing the whole of the soul-life; and because the whole life of the soul is in each, distinct endowments constitute an indissoluble unity. The unity joins freedom or self-determination, intelligence or consciousness, and emotion or sensibility as in a life-point. This mysterious life-point is *I*. Ego is the centre of three distinct classes of psychological

¹ System of Doctrine, I, p. 450-453.

² Phil. ii. 5-8.

powers and activities. Each class presumes the two other classes. Each endowment maintains its ideal status and form of action in the degree that the other endowments are normally active.

This analogue was followed by Augustine. But instead of using the trinal structure of the human soul as the highest analogy, instead of holding firmly the generic difference between the infinite Creator and the finite creature, the trinal distinctions of the human soul became rather the principle of thought concerning God. Father and Son and Spirit became in effect three primordial attributes.¹ We may not think of the Father as sovereign will, of the Son as the absolute understanding, and of the Spirit as the divine memory. Whilst Augustine firmly maintained the catholic faith concerning the triune God, he failed in the rational construction of trinitarian distinctions to affirm for each a personal mode of divine unity.

¹ "Since then these three, memory, understanding, will, are not three lives, but one life; not three minds but one mind; it follows certainly that neither are they three substances, but one substance. Since memory, which is called life and mind and substance, is so called in respect to itself; but it is called memory, relatively to something. And I should say the same also of understanding and will, since they are called understanding and will relatively to something; but each in respect to itself is called life, and mind and essence. And hence these three are one in that they are one life, one mind, one essence." Aug. de Trin. v. 11. 18, Cf. iv. 2.

On this analogy of Augustine, Dr. Wm. G. T. Shedd says: "The ternary of memory, understanding and will is an adequate analogy to the Trinity in respect to equal substantiality. But it fails when the separate *consciousness* of the trinitarian distinctions is brought into consideration. The three faculties of memory, understanding, and will, are not so objective to each other as to admit of three forms of consciousness, of the use of the personal pronouns and of the personal actions that are ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It also fails in that these three are not *all* the modes of the mind. There are other faculties, *e. g.*, the imagination. The whole essence of the mind is in this also." Post-Nic. Fathers, Vol. III. p. 143. Cf. Schaff's Church History, III. § 130

3. Three distinct classes of endowments of the human soul, will, reason and feeling, help us rather to discern the mysterious truth of qualitative difference in unity, and of unity in qualitative difference ; but not the essential unity of trinitarian persons.

Intelligence and will differ not in degree but in kind. Yet the will determines itself intelligently, consciously, rationally ; and the mind or intellect knows, reasons, reflects spontaneously and freely. Thinking and knowing are voluntary activities. Purposes and plans are intelligent determinations. The whole life of the soul is in the will. The whole life of the soul is in the intellect. The soul is an indivisible unity of which intellect and will are organs or members.

Analogous to this psychological trinality is the trinality of God ; but no more than remotely analogous ; the analogy may, however, help to lead us from finite spirit to infinite Spirit.¹ Will and intellect differ in quality ; but in-

¹ On the terminology of Nicene trinitarianism Dr. Shedd says: "Inasmuch as the meaning of the term Person was more difficult to reach and state, than the meaning of the term Essence, more imperfection and indefiniteness appear in the terminology employed. The three-foldness is more difficult to grasp than unity. The human mind quite readily apprehends the notion of substance, and of attributes. These two conceptions apply to all forms of created being, and are familiar to the reflection of the human understanding, though when examined they baffle a perfectly metaphysical comprehension. But the doctrine of a 'subsistence' in the substance of the Godhead brings to view a species of existence that is so anomalous, and unique, that the human mind derives little or no aid from those analogies which assist in all other cases. The hypostasis is a real subsistence,—a solid essential form of existence, and not a mere emanation, or energy, or manifestation,—but it is intermediate between substance and attributes. It is not identical with the substance, for there are not three substances. It is not identical with attributes, for the three Persons each equally possess all the divine attributes. 'We know,' says Howe, 'that the hypostatical distinction cannot be less than is sufficient to sustain dis-

stead of dividing the one essence of the soul, will and intellect by their polar difference constitute the soul a unity. Either by itself would make the soul a single thing. By the vital unity of different faculties the soul is an organism. Father and Son differ, each from the other, by that which is peculiar to each, *ιδιότης*, as the will differs by being self-determinative, and the intellect differs by the faculty of knowing and thinking. But the will in the organism of the human soul does not answer to the Father in the constitution of the Godhead, nor the human reason to the Son. The Father is the unity of both knowledge and freedom. He is in the Godhead a hypostatic distinction. The Son and the Spirit are each the unity of knowledge and freedom. Of each we affirm, not qualitative difference, but personal difference. But as the will is human will in organic union with intellect, not when thought of separately, so Father and Son are each personal, each a distinct Self, in the absolute unity of the Holy Spirit. Each Self is a distinct centre of freedom and knowledge, but each is a Self only as a member of the absolute spiritual organism. As the whole life of the soul is without division in the will distinct from the intellect, in the intellect distinct from will, so the undivided wholeness of the Godhead is in the Father, distinguished by fatherhood from the Son and the Spirit; and the undivided wholeness of the Godhead is in the Son, distinguished by sonship from the Spirit and the Father. Further, as will and intellect, or ethical and rational activities, are complementary members of the hu-

distinct predicates or attributions, nor can it be so great as to intrench upon the unity of the Godhead.' Hence the mind is called upon to grasp the notion of a species of existence that is totally *sui generis*, and not capable of illustration by any ordinary comparisons and analogies." History of Christian Doctrine, Vol. I. p. 364.

man *ego* wherein intellectual feeling and moral feeling are an indivisible unity, so the distinct selfhood of the Father, the begetting principle in the divine nature, and the selfhood of the Son, the begotten One, are the absolute personality in the distinct selfhood of the Spirit, in whom the *κοινωνία* of the Son and the Father is eternal, infinite, immutable.

For want of an adequate vocabulary¹ theology in the endeavor to express the whole truth of the triune God-idea finds it convenient to use the word *unity* with a two-fold meaning. Each divine Self is a personal unity, for in each the ethical and logical, love and light, are one divine life ; Father and Son and Spirit being in this respect equal. But each Self is differentiated by His own property, *ιδιότης*; the Father by fatherhood, the Son by sonship, the Spirit by *κοινωνία*. In respect of properties, Father and Son and Spirit are not the same. But the trinitarian differences condition the one organism. To denote distinctively the absolute organism we have to use the word unity in the most exalted sense ; we have to affirm the truth that the selfhood of the Father and the selfhood of the Son are one absolute Self by the distinct selfhood of the Spirit. As the indivisible unity of will and intellect constitute the relative personality of man ; so the fatherhood of the Father and the Sonship of the Son in the *κοινωνία* of the Spirit constitute the absolute Personality of the Godhead. Each personal distinction is a logico-ethical unity, a Self ; and the absolute Per-

¹ Says Augustine: "When, then, it is asked what the three are, or who the three are, we betake ourselves to the finding out of some special or general name under which we may embrace these three; and no such name occurs to the mind, because the supereminence of the Godhead surpasses the power of customary speech. For God is more truly thought than He is uttered, and exists more truly than He is thought." De Trin. vii. 4, 7.

sonality is the Unity of unities, the eternal Godhead, who exists of Himself, in Himself, for Himself.

4. The endeavor rationally to construe the personal distinctions of the Godhead according to the trinal organization of Christian revelation is not open to the objection that it is an arbitrary or purely subjective method. It is not an effort of thought to demonstrate the rationalness of triunity from the resources of human thought. Such an effort is justly chargeable with being falsely subjective. But when thought seeks to construe triunity conformably to the law of divine organic unity as this unity addresses faith in the New Testament, where the one God is Father and Son and Holy Spirit, the method becomes objective and reasonable. Theology seeks to apprehend the absolute Good, the mystery of all mysteries, after a logical order answering to the unique self-manifestation of the absolute Good in the personal history of Jesus, the Son of Man.

Nor is this objective method open to the criticism that it affirms distinctions in divine unity without real differences. The office of the Son is not the same as the office of the Father, nor is the office of the Holy Spirit the same as the office of the Son. Philosophical methods of construing the trinity of the Godhead have found it especially difficult to maintain the necessary personality of the Spirit; and to maintain for the Spirit a position coördinate as to Godhead with the Son and the Father. The consequence is that non-christological efforts to rationally construe divine trinity come short as to that essential member of the idea which in the New Testament is especially prominent. On the Holy Spirit Christian revelation lays positive emphasis. The entire divine-human historical process culminates in Pentecost, in the advent, the abiding presence and the completing agency of the Holy Spirit.

The communion of love in the Spirit with Christ glorified is the flower of true religion. Such position of the Holy Spirit in the kingdom of God cannot be arbitrary. The structure of Christian revelation must answer to the constitution of the Godhead. The advent and agency of the Spirit is the final stage of Christian revelation for the reason that in the constitution of the Godhead the Father and the Son affirm differences and unity in the *κοινωνία* of the Spirit. In the unity of the Spirit, Father and Son are one God. The Spirit completes the idea of the *Unity* of unities. The third member in the constitution of the Godhead is thus a necessity of the God-idea. If we think of the personal distinctions according to the unitrinal structure of Christian revelation, the triune idea cannot logically be affirmed and maintained without the personal *κοινωνία*. We get a conception in fullest accord with the New Testament, and most satisfying to theological thought when we see in the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit the oneness of the Father and the Son.

It is therefore not accidental that the same word *Spirit*, *τὸ πνεῦμα*, has a twofold signification as applied to God by the New Testament. It is the word which names the being of God as *God*. God is Spirit.¹ *Πνεῦμα ὁ θεός*. It is also the word that denotes the selfhood of God in distinction from the selfhood of the Father and the Son. Absolute Spirit, who is Father and Son, is the absolute unity by the eternal communion of fatherhood and sonship in the personal Spirit.

¹ John iv. 24.

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The positive emphasis put on the *κοινωνία* of the Holy Spirit in the endeavor rationally to construe the dogma of triunity enables theological thought to escape some of the principal difficulties that have embarrassed the dogma. Father, Son and Spirit are not fixed points in the triune idea. Nor are personal distinctions three species of a genus. Nor yet may we think of Three in God as mathematical units. If rational reflection be guided by the principle of a *κοινωνία* which is personal we may be able to transcend the mechanical, the mathematical and naturalistic forms of construction.

1. If we should think of Father and Son and Spirit as *fixed* points, as three persons, each opposite to the other two, and each Self maintaining an incommunicable selfhood, the unity of the God-idea is surrendered. We shall have an association and harmony of three divine persons rather than unity of the trinitarian Godhead. In spite of every effort to the contrary, we introduce an element of separateness and of individuality; we are moving on the current of tritheism.

Emphasizing the living and ethical *κοινωνία* of the Holy Spirit, we may escape this deficiency of thought. The *κοινωνία* of the Spirit affirms eternal interaction. John of Damascus sought to express it by the word *περιχώρησις*; the scholastics by such terms as *circumincessio* and *intercommunio*. The thought is fully warranted by such passages as John xiv. 10: *ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἔστιν*; and *ὁ δὲ πατήρ ἐν ἐμῇ ἀγάπῃ ποιεῖ τὰ ἔνθα αἶτόν*. As given by the revised version: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in

me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father abiding in me doeth his works." "He does not say that the Father and Himself are one and the same person. He constantly prays to the Father, saying: *Thou*. But it is a union by which they live *the one in the other*, and this relation has as its background the life of the Logos. . . . There are in the union of Jesus with the Father two aspects: *I in the Father*: Jesus emptying Himself in order to transfer Himself to God; and *the Father in me*: God communicating to Jesus all His wealth of strength and wisdom. On one side, Jesus making a void in Himself; on the other, God filling this void."¹ The activity of the Son in the Father and the activity of the Father in the Son is the *κοινωνία* of the Spirit.

2. The intercommunion, the eternal *κοινωνία*, of the Spirit is to be viewed under a threefold aspect. The *κοινωνία* of Father and Son is vital, logical, ethical.

It is vital. The life of the Father lives in the Son. The life of the Son lives in the Father. The vital intercommunion is eternal in the Spirit.

The *κοινωνία* is logical. The Father knows Himself in the Son. The Son knows Himself in the Father. In the unity of the Spirit this activity of reciprocal knowledge is absolute.

The *κοινωνία* is ethical. The Father loves the Son. The Son loves the Father. In other words, the Father communicates Himself to the Son. Responsively the Son communicates Himself to the Father; Father and Son being equal in free self-assertion and in free self-communication. The eternal concrete intercommunication of love is the Spirit.

¹ Godet *in loco*.

The Spirit is the *κοινωνία* of divine life, divine light, divine love.

Here again the best available analogy, though remote and inadequate, is the human soul. Intellect and will are distinct, but not separable. Of the will we predicate choice, self-determination; of the intellect, knowledge and memory. I think and know and imagine inasmuch as I am a free agent, an autonomy. Between intellect and will there is no external association. They do not stand apart. Intellect pre-supposes and implies the spontaneous action of will; the exercise of will pre-supposes and implies knowledge. When I put forth a responsible act of volition it is done with self-consciousness; when I pursue a course of rational thought it is self-directed action. Human personality is the dynamic centre of the constant interaction of three classes of endowments, cognitive, ethical and pathic. Neither prevails normally without the dynamic action of the others. Feeling, intelligence and will are one personal life. In this organic unity each endowment is ever distinct, yet each is itself only in vital union with complemental endowments.

The living interaction of the three factors of human personality may serve as a parable of eternal tri-personal intercommunion. The absolute Personality is the absolute Unity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, the Unity that affirms the eternal differences and the eternal intercommunion of personal distinctions. If we deny that each is a Self having its own property, *ιδιότης*, we deny oneness of the God of Christian revelation. Deity becomes a *single* thing. On the other hand, if we deny the eternal vital and ethical *intercommunion* of Three in the constitution of the one living God, we by implication renounce the idea of absolute personality. Therefore any conception of tri-

unity that resolves the distinctions into impersonal modes of existence, or affirms either Self independently, or conceives of either Self as a separate life of love, is to be rejected as radically defective. The absolute Spirit is one life, one light, one love, who is the blessed fellowship of threefold personal self-existence.

3. The personal *νοινωρία* excludes a construction that conceives Father, Son and Spirit to be three species of one genus.

If personal distinctions be construed from the point of view of species, the distinctions are separated, and God's essential nature becomes impersonal. The Three will be three individuals possessing a common nature, like three men, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. The nature might be personal in each individual. Logically wrought out we shall have for thought three Gods; a distortion which Christian theology has always promptly rejected as contradictory to the foundation truth of the Christian religion.

As the one true God is the only God His threefold mode of existence is in the absolute sense unique. No order of things in the sub-human natural world furnishes an object of comparison. The logical differentiation of genus into species, taken as a type of trinitarian thought, leads theology directly into antichristian error. From no object can theological thought derive aid except from man; even this is inadequate. Mankind is differentiated into races; each race into nationalities. Races are not different species of man, nor nations different species of a race. Under this negative aspect, mankind may furnish a remote analogy; but the analogy may easily mislead thought. Races though not species are separate individual branches of mankind; if we apply to God the conception of one human life in different races, we shall introduce into the

God-idea the principle of separation. The false emphasis that would thus be put on each Self, would, like thought governed by the conception of species, issue in tritheism.

But if self-consistent emphasis be put on the *κοινωνία* of the Spirit we surmount the error of specific differences. The *κοινωνία* is a distinct divine selfhood, a logico-ethical life-point, that affirms threefold personal distinctions in one God. The position and office of the personal Spirit is under the guidance of Christian revelation to be contemplated by spiritual vision, and by direct acts of believing thought. The fact that for the office of the Spirit in the constitution of the Godhead there is not, either in nature or in man, an adequate or safe analogy, brings into prominence the necessary truth that the idea of Three in One, the ontologic triunity of the Godhead, is a transcendent truth. We may touch this unique truth, lay hold of it and approximately formulate it, only by an intuitive vision of God in Christ Jesus. The union of the person of the Father and of the person of the Son in the person of the Spirit is a union which is incomparable. In scriptural knowledge of objective triune truth we may make satisfying progress only by adoring thought sustained by fellowship in the Spirit with the triune God Himself.¹

4. From these considerations it is obvious that if in order to distinguish Father, Son and Spirit, theology, con-

¹ Says Martensen: "We can have a *True*, though not an adequate knowledge of the nature of God. We cannot have an adequate knowledge of God, that is, a knowledge co-extensive in every feature with its subject. Such a knowledge would be that vision of Him face to face, which cannot be ours till the last change is accomplished, and everything partial shall have ceased. We can, however, have a true knowledge, that is, a knowledge true in principle, true in its tendency, and true in the goal at which it aims; true because it goes out from and leads to God." *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 90.

formably to the suggestions of the New Testament, applies the numeral *three*, the numeral is not used in the ordinary mathematical sense. The mathematical 1 and the mathematical 3 are abstract units. Neither has contents. Neither affirms internal relationship. The numeral 3 has only quantitative significance. To give it qualitative import I must supply contents. I shall have to say 3 trees or 3 men. In this abstract mathematical sense theology uses no numeral. It does not matter whether we should speak of God as *one* or as *three*, in either case we should fail to affirm the God-idea of Christian revelation. The unity of God is not the mathematical unit, not a single abstract ideal point quantitatively apprehended. Nor is the trinity of God the conjunction of three units, not the fixed association of three ideal points, each quantitatively apprehended.

The conception of number is inseparable from a sound construction of the Godhead, but number has both negative and positive force. Negatively taken, the numerical conception denies all forms and shades of polytheism. The God of Christian revelation is the one and only God.¹ Positively taken, number is concrete and dynamic.² The one God is the absolute Spirit, who lives His triune life of love in light; between Him and the world there is an unchangeable generic difference and opposition. When the-

¹ Deut. vi. 4; I Cor. viii. 6; Isa. xlv. 5, 6.

² "In the divine Trinity consubstantiality denotes not only sameness of kind, but at the same time *numerical* unity; not merely the *unum in specie*, but also the *unum in numero*. . . . The divine substance is absolutely indivisible by reason of its simplicity, and absolutely inextensible and untransferable by reason of its infinity; whereas a corporeal substance can be divided, and the human nature can be multiplied by generation. . . . The Church teaches not *one* divine essence *and* three persons, but *one* essence *in* three persons." Schaff's Church History, III. p. 673.

ology proceeds further and says, that one God, being Father, Son and Spirit, is Three, it means that each denotes, not an abstraction, not a single point, but an objective difference of office and property in the divine constitution. Each affirms a member of the organic whole; each is peculiar to Himself, yet as to essential nature each is identical with other members. Not only that **three members** possess the same divine nature, but that the divine nature of each is the same Deity. Each is the one only God.¹

Here again the analogy of the human soul may in a measure sustain theological thought. The soul is a living unity, not a mathematical unit. Will and intellect and feeling are not three abstract points; they are members of an organism. We may speak both of the unity of the soul and of its trinality, but we use neither term in a merely

¹ Says Bishop John Pearson: "In human generations the son is of the same nature with the father, and yet is not the same man; because though he hath an essence of the same kind, yet he hath not the same essence; the power of generation depending on the first prolific benediction, *increase and multiply*, it must be made by way of multiplication, and thus every son becomes another man. But the divine essence, being by reason of its simplicity not subject to division, and in respect of its infinity incapable of multiplication, is so communicated as not to be multiplied; insomuch that he which proceedeth by that communication, hath not only the same nature, but is also the same God. The Father God, and the Word God; Abraham man, and Isaac man: but Abraham one man, Isaac another man; not so the Father one God and the Word another, but the Father and the Word both the same God. Being then the propriety of generation is founded in the essential similitude of the Son unto the Father, by reason of the same which he receiveth from him; being the full perfect nature of God is communicated unto the Word, and that more intimately and with greater unity or identity than can be found in human generations: it followeth that this communication of the divine nature is the proper generation by which Christ is, and is called the true and proper Son of God." *Exposition of the Creed*, Art 2, p. 209. Ed. W. S. Dobson, New York, 1850.

quantitative sense. *One* designates the organism, and *three* marks its fundamental distinctions. After an analogous manner we apply numerical terms to the God of Christian revelation. *One* designates the self-existent spiritual organism, the absolute Personality; and of one absolute personality the numeral *three*, denoting Father and Son and Spirit, predicates eternal hypostatic distinctions. Theology does not say that one absolute Spirit is three different absolute Spirits; just as psychology does not say that, because of the difference between freedom, knowledge and feeling, one human soul is three human souls. But just as psychology teaches that one psychic organism is ethical and rational and pathic in each of which distinctions the wholeness of psychic life is immanent, so Christian Dogmatics teaches that God, the divine Organism, is in Himself paternal and filial and unique *νοινωρία*, whilst in each hypostasis the wholeness of self-existent Being is immanent.

§ 98.

Theology has found it convenient and important to adopt a general term for the dynamic Three. For this purpose it has accepted the Greek derivative *hypostasis*, and the Latin derivatives *subsistence* and *person*; the term *person* being in modern times more commonly used.¹ To this term philosophy has objected on the ground that *person* implies limitation, and therefore is incompatible with divine absoluteness.

¹ From the Latin *persona*, *per* and *sonare*, to sound through, originally the name applied to the mask of a Roman actor, then to his assumed character. From the character assumed by the actor the word passed to the actor himself. The meaning then became general, denoting an individual man, an ethico-rational agent. It is this derived meaning, not its etymological import, that furnishes a basis for the application of *person* to the trinitarian distinctions of the Godhead.

The popular mind objects because three persons mean three separate individuals, and therefore the expression is incompatible with divine unity. Both classes of objections disappear in a correct apprehension of the truth expressed by the word *person*.

1. A human person is a separate individual,—an ethico-rational creature embodied and corporeal. Individuality, however, expresses rather the external and material form of organization.

Personality is immaterial and spiritual. It is the union of spiritual being and spontaneous self-consciousness. Subjectively, it denotes unity of ethical and rational life; a spiritual unity which asserts and expresses itself by the concrete term *I*. True, each man is a person differing from other persons; he lives and thinks, and is active within himself, and is outwardly active according to his own self-determinations. Nevertheless, it is *personality* that lifts a man above all sub-human kingdoms, and amid numberless differentiations declares the identity of humanity in all races, and nations, and individuals. Hence the word person, taken in its most spiritual sense, is perhaps the fittest word we have to express the unique differences of Self from Self in the divine constitution without implying division or separation. The only rival is hypostasis.

2. The objection of philosophy that the word *person* is inapplicable to God because the word necessarily implies limitation, whilst God is infinite, proceeds on a physical assumption as to the nature of personality.

Personality is a concrete spiritual centre whose distin-

Etymologically considered, *hypostasis* has no Sabellian tinge, and in this respect is better fitted to denote different *subsistences* in the same Essence.

guishing property is autonomy, self-conscious freedom.¹ Instead of necessarily implying limitation, it presumes directly the opposite, illimitableness. Personality is superior to finite forms of existence, and relatively independent of them. *Ego* opens the portals to all realms, physical, ethical and spiritual, descends into the depths and ascends into the heights of existence, traces all *radii* from all centres, measures all circumferences and in the very act transcends their limitations. To the endeavors of will, active according to the law of freedom, no bounds in times past have been set; and notwithstanding the fact that present achievements in many spheres transcend the deeds of the past no restrictive lines can be drawn now. Who supposes that science has finished its discoveries? or genius completed the circle of inventions? or skill achieved her most magnificent work? or philosophy spoken the final word of wisdom?

If it be said that each *ego* encounters an alter-*ego*, and thus each limits the other, the reply is that the encounter is mutual self-assertion, mutual self-development and self-perfection. Mutual self-assertion is conjoined with mutual self-surrender. When *ego* affirms its normal attitude and maintains normal relations to alter-*ego*, each complements the other. Freedom is confirmed and enlarged. This

¹ Says Martensen: "All the objections brought against the personality of God, converge at last in the irrational requirement that God shall be Himself the Universe (*unum versum in omnia*), instead of being its Lord." Dogmatics, p. 81.

And Dörner says: "Wird nämlich die göttliche Einheit als persönlich im Sinne von Selbstbewusstsein und Selbstbestimmung gedacht, die Hypostasen aber, statt sabellianisch in sie aufgelöst zu werden, vielmehr als ewige Vermittlungspunkte der absoluten göttlichen Persönlichkeit, die in ihnen ist, so scheint eine befriedigende Einigung der Gegensätze möglich wie gefordert zu sein." Glaubenslehre I. p. 367.

ideal law of action and interaction is *love*; and love is the inmost satisfying fellowship between person and person. In maintaining the fellowship of love *ego* communicates itself to another, and in turn it is open to the self-communication of another; yet by such inter-self-communication each asserts its distinct selfhood. Normal self-assertion and normal self-communication condition each other. Personality thus dissolves all physical limits, all defined circumferences, and enters every realm, physical and ethical, earthly and heavenly, human and divine; and in entering a realm, human or divine, personality possesses it and is possessed by it. Of no other creature-subject can unlimitedness be predicated.

By its unique genius the word *person* or the Greek *hypostasis*, becomes the most suitable chariot of thought and expression for the concrete distinctions in the Christian revelation of the Godhead. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we say that each subsistence in the unity of the divine essence is a person, a logico-ethical centre of the life of love in light, we *deny limitedness*. The Father as personal does not exclude but postulates the Son, because the Son is not the Father. The Son as personal does not exclude but postulates the Father, because the Father is not the Son. The reciprocal personal relation is the absolute communion of love, that is, Spirit. By the difference of personal fatherhood from personal sonship, by the difference of personal sonship from personal fatherhood, the Father and the Son live in an absolute intercommunion. In other words, the fellowship of Father and Son in the *νοῦς* of the Holy Spirit is absolute, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit no less than the Father and the Son is personal. So soon as we deny tri-personality, or deny the idea which this word embodies, we deny the absolute inter-

communion of the divine life of love in light; and with the denial of triune ethical intercommunion, we deny of each subsistence unlimitedness. Then it would be false to say that as the Father hath life in Himself so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; false for Jesus to teach that all things which the Father hath are mine; false to say of the Spirit that He shall take of the things of Christ and show them unto His disciples.¹ To express the same thing positively: The tri-personal differentiation of one divine essence conditions the absoluteness and ethical perfection of the Godhead.

The truth is, the word person or hypostasis is the best available word by which theological thought may in fittest manner formulate according to laws of human reason the trinitarian distinctions of the absolute spiritual organism.

The propriety of the application of the word to God has been vindicated philosophically by Lotze, one of the foremost German thinkers of modern times.²

¹ John xvi. 13-15,

² Cf. *Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion* by Herman Lotze, edited by Prof. Geo. T. Ladd, ch. iv. pp. 64-69.

"From these inner states the entire subsequent development of the spiritual life, and therefore that of the personality, proceeds. It suffices for laying the foundation of the latter, if a spiritual being has the faculty of apprehending itself as 'I' in opposition to its own 'states,' which are only its 'states' and not 'I.' A relation to an external reality is not necessary; and, consequently, 'personality' also is not bound to the condition of finiteness,—to wit, to that of being limited by another reality of the same kind." . . . "Only the same concession, and no more, is required in relation to the Infinite Spirit. It is not to be thought of as somewhat which it were barely possible to imagine, but as somewhat which is imagined as eternally and unceasingly actual; somewhat to which no such state of rest was ever antecedent, as a state from which it would have been obliged to be extricated by means of special influence." . . .

"All these hindrances of a perfect 'personality' we can imagine as not existent in the Infinite Spirit. On this account, we conclude with

§ 99.

In the trinal constitution of the Godhead there is an *order* of existence. That order comes definitely to view in the apostolic commission; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.¹ Theology affirms this order in the trinitarian dogma. It is supported by Christian revelation, by the worship of the Church, and by the history of theological thought.

1. The revelation of the pre-Christian dispensation declares principally and definitely the fundamental truth that Jehovah is one God, unchangeably the same in unity, power, wisdom, holiness, goodness and truth. Of the mystery that in Jehovah there are ethical distinctions we have numerous intimations in the books of the Old Testament; but the distinction of fatherhood and sonship in the relations of Jehovah to Himself does not come to view, and by consequence no trinitarian order in the unity of divine essence.

2. From revelation in the history of the Abrahamic covenant and of the Mosaic economy, Christianity differs by the central historical fact that 'the Word became flesh.' In the person of His only-begotten Son God became man in Jesus of Nazareth. The relation between God in heaven and the Word made flesh living on earth was the relation of Father and Son. Jesus names Himself the Son of Man inasmuch as He asserted, developed and perfectly realized the divine idea of manhood. Jesus names Himself the Son

the assertion which is exactly the opposite of the customary one: *Perfect* personality is reconcilable only with the conception of an Infinite Being; for finite beings only an approximation to this is attainable."

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19.

of God¹ inasmuch as He is metaphysically the only begotten One of God.² He whom God in the fulness of time sent forth from Himself was His Son.² The objective divine self-manifestation in the person of Jesus Christ uniformly addresses us, either explicitly or by implication, in this order: Father and Son. The pivot on which the manifestation of paternal and filial relations in God's being turns is the forthcoming of the Son by incarnation. The incarnate Son pre-supposes the non-incarnate Father. The order accordingly in which these divine subsistences address us in Christian revelation argues a corresponding order in God's self-existence.

The gift of the Holy Spirit follows upon the ascension and glorification of the incarnate Son. He sends the Spirit from the Father. The miraculous Advent on the day of Pentecost completes the circle of triune revelation. Revelation in this fact attains its culminating epoch. The Spirit creates the new life-communion between the incarnate Son glorified and His believing people, and by this new life-communion declares the reality and truth of divine fatherhood. The complete order in which the history of Christian revelation addresses us is therefore given in the following formula: Father and Son and Holy Spirit. There is objective significance in this order of succession as really as in the name that each of the divine Three bears. No one may baptize in the name of the Spirit and of the Son and of the Father, nor in any other transposition; nor may the Church confess her faith by saying: I believe in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and in the Father.

This trinal order in the history of Christian revelation and in human speech is not accidental. Nor is it an ac-

¹ Luke xxii. 70; John v. 25; John xvii. 1; Cf. Matt. xvi. 16; Luke i. 35; John i. 34; iii. 18; v. 26.

² John i. 14.

³ Gal. iv. 4.

commodation either to the organization of the family or to the structure of language. We have to reason from God to man, not from man to God. There is an unchangeable order in the eternal life of the Godhead: therefore there is a corresponding order in Christian revelation. It is this transcendent order of trinal divine love that is revealed by the succession of the divine names: Father, Son, and Spirit.

3. Faith and worship are responsive to the order of trinitarian revelation. The response is spontaneous, being quickened and shaped by the dynamic of objective truth. Objective truth gives form to the faith which truth evokes. For this reason the apostolic symbol, and the other ecumenical creeds are trinitarian, and they observe the Messianic order of trinality. In all the ages the Church has confessed Christian faith according to the formula of baptism: I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only begotten Son, and in the Holy Ghost. Agreeably to the same order the Church worships God in her hymns and prayers. The Gloria in Excelsis, the Gloria Patri, the Te Deum and the doxologies are constructed according to triune law. The triune law governing these classic hymns is the archetype of the 'Collects' and all approved offices of Christian worship.

4. The same triune law has wrought in the organization of the Church year. Holding the faith of God the Father, the Church introduces the Christian year with the observance of Advent, a season of humiliation and prayer, preparing her membership for the celebration of the holy nativity. Her Christmas festival is followed by Epiphany, the manifestation of the incarnate Son to the Gentiles as their Saviour. After Epiphany the Church passes on to celebrate other cardinal facts of His mediatorship, and in

the order of historical succession, His sufferings, death and resurrection, ending with His ascension from earth to the right hand of the Father. Having now in faith and worship descended with the Lord according to the law of humiliation and ascended with Him according to the law of exaltation, the Church ten days later celebrates the advent of the Holy Spirit, the beginning of the third and final period of Christian revelation: in the final period the Abrahamic covenant, and the Mosaic economy, especially all epochs and stages of the personal history and mediatorial work of the incarnate Son, from His conception and birth to His glorification, attain to consummation. The structure of the Church year is a perennial witness to eternal order in the constitution of the Godhead.

5. The progress of theological thought during six centuries is fashioned after the same law. The first great question in theology pertained to the dignity and office of the Son in the constitution of the Godhead. The controversies and the convulsions of the Greek Church on this problem culminated in the first Ecumenical Council, 325.

The Nicene Creed deals directly with the person of Christ, His eternal sonship and His incarnation. There, however, it pauses. Faith and Christian thought were, in that epoch of development, not equal to the determination of the position and office of the Holy Spirit. There was a delay of fifty-six years. Not until the year 381 had faith and reason become equal to the necessity of passing from Son to Spirit. The Council of Constantinople gave formal expression to revealed truth concerning the third person in the Godhead, thus completing the structure of the Nicene symbol.

6. The process of Christian thought on the trinitarian distinctions is in sympathy with the organization of the

Church year; the Church year is constructed according to the order of the catholic faith; the catholic faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the response of the Church to the divine order of revelation given in Messianic history, and this order of revelation in history rests upon the eternal order in the absolute organism of divine existence.

The eternal is the ground of the temporal. The constitution of the Creator is the ground of the new creation. The eternal order of existence conditions the order of trinal self-revelation in time. It is not the human and temporal that is the pattern of Christian revelation. It is God Himself that conditions the unique economy of Christianity, and this unique economy has prompted and governed the method of the apostolic faith, the formula of baptism, and the normal process of theological thought.

Thus construed, the mirror of the New Testament, the faith and worship of the Church, and the corresponding process of theological thought are all living witnesses to the triunity of the Godhead.

CHAPTER X.

ARGUMENT FOR THE TRIUNITY OF GOD.

§ 100.

Of the two precedings chapters the principal aim has been, not so much to establish the truth of the doctrine respecting triunity, as to expound the contents of the Christian God-idea. Assuming that God is Father and Son and Holy Ghost because He has so revealed Himself

in the Messianic kingdom, our enquiry has been this: What is the import of these distinctions? or in what sense is triunity to be understood? The answer it has been my endeavor to give in a twofold form: 1. by an exposition of the structure of Christian revelation as represented by the evangelists and apostles; then proceeding on the basis of this exposition, 2. by a dogmatic statement developed in accordance with the laws of Christian thought. The enquiry and discussion pursued by these chapters, though aiming chiefly at an expression of the contents of the triune idea, have in the nature of things the force of a positive argument in support of the Christian doctrine.

The self-verifying force of a statement of triune truth made under the guidance of apostolic teaching and developed according to the logic of Christian faith, will of itself be to many minds the adequate argument. Intrinsically it is the most cogent argument. Yet it is legitimate to put the additional question: On what ground does Christian Dogmatics hold and maintain that God is objectively Three in One?

The question may be answered in two ways. The one is direct and objective. It is the argument that lies in the immediate relation which Christian revelation bears to the faith and consciousness of Christians. The other method is based on the teaching of the New Testament. The argument from Scripture is in our age indispensable; but it is secondary to the self-authentication of triune truth which addresses us from the communion of God in Christ with His people by the Holy Spirit.

I shall first present the direct argument or the self-verifying force of triune truth; then pass on to consider the significance of New Testament teaching; and follow this teaching by the consideration of some analogies.

I. SELF-VERIFYING FORCE OF CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

§ 101.

Belief in God's triune existence does not depend on premises other than the self-manifestation of triune existence. The ground of belief that God is Father and Son and Holy Ghost is analogous to the ground on which rests the common belief that there is a divine Being.

I. In their natural state men affirm the truth that God exists, not by reasoning from premises other than God, nor by induction from manifold phenomena, but by virtue of an intuitive perception.¹ So men born of water and the Spirit, by virtue of a like intuitive perception affirm that

¹ Herbert Spencer unequivocally concedes this fundamental postulate of all knowledge and all thought. "Every one of the arguments by which the relativity of our knowledge is demonstrated," says he, "distinctly postulates the positive existence of something beyond the relative. To say that we cannot know the Absolute, is, by implication, to affirm that there *is* an Absolute. In the very denial of our power to learn *what* the Absolute is, there lies hidden the assumption *that* it is; and the making of this assumption proves that the Absolute has been present to the mind, not as a nothing, but as a something. Similarly with every step in the reasoning by which this doctrine is upheld. The Noumenon, everywhere named as the antithesis of the Phenomenon, is throughout necessarily thought of as an actuality. It is rigorously impossible to conceive that our knowledge is a knowledge of Appearances only, without at the same time conceiving a Reality of which they are appearances; for appearance without reality is unthinkable." *First Principles*, p. 88.

Spencer concludes his book with these decisive words: "He who rightly interprets the doctrine contained in this work will see that though the relation of subject and object renders necessary to us these antithetical conceptions of Spirit and Matter; the one is no less than the other to be regarded as a sign of the Unknown Reality which underlies both," p. 559.

The metaphysic of Spencer is incontestably sound in maintaining

God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The two perceptions I may distinguish by using the terminology of Paul. The one is the intuition of 'flesh,' the other the intuition of 'spirit.' The belief in Deity of the psychic man is the immediate affirmation of the human spirit subject to the disorganization and perverting power of sin ; the belief of the spiritual man in the triune God is the immediate affirmation of the human spirit adopted into the new communion with God in Christ. The one is a member of the old Adamic race, and stands in the economy of the first creation ; the other is a member of the regenerate race begotten by the Spirit of the Second Man, and stands in the economy of the new creation.

The psychic man has an intuition of God corresponding to God's revelation of Himself in the existing disorganization of the Adamic race and the existing constitution of the material universe. The spiritual man is living in the bosom of a very different economy, and sustains a concrete relation to God different in kind. As a consequence of this new attitude and new communion he has an intuition of God answerable to God's revelation of Himself in the kingdom of the Spirit. In this kingdom regenerate men discern the objective presence of one God to be threefold.

2. Of the existence of divine Being logical *proof* is neither necessary nor possible. The idea is older and more necessary than a conscious logical process.¹ God is the

that a 'Reality' is the necessary pre-supposition 'of Spirit and Matter.' Reasoning only from the phenomena of nature and the facts of our common consciousness he is correct also in pronouncing the Reality 'Unknown'; though elsewhere he contends that of the 'Reality' we have an "indefinite consciousness." His negation coincides with the metaphysic of Jesus Christ, when He says: "neither doth any know the Father." Matt. xi. 27.

¹Says Arnobius of the fourth century in his book *Against the*

idea which is fundamental to reflection and to legitimate reasoning on all questions. To raise the issue whether or not God exists, pre-supposes the idea of His existence. The God-idea, whether a faint perception, or a historical sentiment, or a firm belief, is accordingly broader and more original than can be the premises of any attempted process of proof. How then can the common belief in God's existence arise from the force of a logical deduction? ¹ The supposed deduction is a *non sequitur*; the conclusion being more comprehensive than any premises.

A like contradiction is evident in the endeavor to *prove* God's existence by the inductive process. Phenomena belong to man, or to nature, or to God. The facts of nature justify an induction of natural law; but natural law, if belief in God be in abeyance, does not warrant a leap from the natural to the supernatural. To infer the supernatural from the natural is illogical. The generalization is not justified by the qualities of the phenomena on which the induction rests. As well infer mind from phenomena exclusively material, or freedom of will from physical force.

Heathen: "Is there any human being who has not entered on the first day of his life with an idea of that Great Head? In whom has it not been implanted by nature, on whom has it not been impressed, aye, stamped almost in his mother's womb even, in whom is there not a native instinct, that He is King and Lord, the ruler of all things that be?" I. 33.

¹ The eloquent words of Archbishop Leighton are here in place: "Why should we use the pitiful light of a candle to discover the sun? and eagerly go about to prove the being of Him who gave being to everything else? who alone exists necessarily, nay, we may boldly say, who alone exists? seeing all other things were by Him extracted out of nothing, and, when compared with Him, they are nothing, and even less than nothing, and vanity!" Then he quotes the words of Jamblicus: "That it is the very being of the soul to know God, on whom it depends." Leighton's Works, Lect. vii. p. 569.

We are drawn into the same contradiction when we reason from human phenomena. The facts of human life and human history are the basis of a generalization; but if the spiritual fact that all men have a perception of a super-human Power be excluded from this basis, the process of generalization must stop with man. An induction from human phenomena, under these conditions, will be some general truth regarding humanity. From man as man, if we rule out the divine phenomena of consciousness, we cannot step over to God. Between God and man there is an infinite chasm. The sentiment that from nature we may rise to nature's God has been shown to be without warrant by natural science and critical philosophy.¹

When, however, we make due account of *all* the facts of consciousness; when we concede that the sense and perception of the Divine are as original, as constant and universal as the sense and perception of self and the external world, we have a broader basis of induction; we recognize the whole of man's environment and all the facts of human consciousness. Reasoning from this complete circle of phenomena we shall infer the divine existence. The divine phenomena of consciousness seem to justify the opinion that God's existence may be proved by inductive reasoning. But the induction is not pure induction. To recognize *divine* phenomena in consciousness and concede

¹ That God exists is the fundamental *axiom*. Logically speaking, no reason can be given, because there is no ground nor condition of His being other than Himself. Hooker says: "The general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God Himself. . . . To make nothing evident of itself unto man's understanding were to take away all possibility of knowing anything. And herein that of Theophrastus is true 'they that seek a reason of all things do utterly overthrow Reason.' 'Ἀπάντων ζητοῦντες λόγον, ἀναιρουῦσι λόγον.'" Ecc. Pol. Bk. I. viii. 5.

their logical force as the basis of reasoning, is to assume the existence of the Divine. The process begins with the belief of the truth which inductive reasoning from phenomena is supposed to suggest and establish.¹

It is important to emphasize the fact that whether we attempt an inductive or deductive process of proof, the general idea of God is broader and richer than any data or premises; and the supposed inference or conclusion that God exists is a truth more original and more certain than the data of the argument. Hence, in as far as pretended logical proof has force, it indirectly has a tendency to warp or falsify the God-idea. This proposition may seem to be extreme, yet a little reflection will demonstrate it to be valid.

God's existence is the absolute foundation truth. It is the deepest and most essential postulate of rational thought. Such fundamental postulate it is demonstrated to be by ethnic religions and by the history of philosophy no less than by the religion of Christ. An argument aiming *to prove* God's existence assumes at least two things: 1. It assumes for the time being, that God's existence is not the most fundamental and most necessary truth; otherwise, the argumentative process would be

¹ Says Dr. De Pressense: "On this point we entirely agree with the theory worked out by Herbert Spencer in his *First Principles*, in which he maintains that the idea of the Infinite and that of the finite are correlatives, and that in the mind of man the finite *only* exists because he believes in the Infinite. This great idea must be inherent in the reason, before reason can educe it from the finite, even from the vastness of the firmament."

"We can easily understand how the Son of the East projected on the heavens the idea of the divine innate in his own soul. . . . But again we say, he would not so have deified nature, if the idea of the divine had not sprung up from the depths of his own being." *A Study of Origins*, p. 455.

throughout self-contradictory, for the purpose is to furnish *proof* of God's existence, and proof derives whatever logical force it may have from a self-evident proposition, from a truth more certain and incontrovertible than the conclusion or inference. 2. It assumes that there are data, whether hypotheses or phenomena, which authenticate themselves with more direct force to reason than God authenticates Himself. Both assumptions are directly in conflict with the God-idea; and so far as their silent force influences men's minds, belief in God is weakened instead of strengthened, and the God-idea is impoverished rather than enriched. Arnobius thought it was as hurtful to try to prove as to deny God's existence. He says that "it is as dangerous to attempt to prove by arguments that God is the highest being, as it is to wish to discover by reasoning that He exists."¹ God becomes a conditional and inferential truth, instead of the reality, the certainty of whose existence is apodictical.

The great classic arguments for the divine existence, the physico-theological, teleological, the moral, and the ontological, have each and all great force of a certain kind; but they all fail of their end, if that end be to furnish *logical* proof of God's existence. To the moral argument Kant accords validity; yet Hegel and Kant, the absolute philosophy and the critical philosophy, have both pronounced all arguments insufficient. Of these traditional arguments the chief value, as has with nice acumen and much force been developed by Dr. Dorner, consists in showing that belief in God is ethical, and rational and natural. That God exists is a truth in fullest accord with our ethical life, our rational activity and our best conceptions of external nature.

¹ Arnobius against the Heathen, i. 32.

3. As the common belief of mankind in divine existence arises from the immediate self-authentication of God to the human soul, so the belief of the Church in divine triunity arises from the immediate self-authentication of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit to Christian believers.¹ The triune idea is the profounder, richer and more satisfying idea.

The belief that Deity exists underlies the fact of the natural creation, and determines our broadest and most thoroughgoing conceptions of creature-existence. Triune truth underlies the new creation. The new creation presupposes, embraces and complements the old creation. The Father by the Son in the Spirit is the author, perfecter and glorifier of the cosmos. Comprehensive as is the natural belief in God's existence, the Christian belief is still more comprehensive, as it embraces God in His relation to the kingdom of nature and to the kingdom of grace. That God is Three in One is thus the truth that conditions the more profound reflection and self-consistent reasoning on nature, on man and on the spiritual world. All normal data, all normal facts in the sphere of matter or of mind; in the sphere of thought and will, can be rightly grasped and interpreted only when studied in their relation to their original ground, the triune foundation Truth. This truth being primary and fundamental in the

¹ "The evangelical relation between authority and freedom is this, that the gospel of Christ, and that independent of frail human guarantees, *attests itself* to the consciousness, to the conscience of men, through its original power of truth and grace, as the sun in the heaven proves its illuminating and warming power to every creature that is not placed outside the domain of its influence; that Christ's is no merely external, but through the relation of our free subordination likewise becomes an internal, authority." Martensen's *Christian Ethics*, iii. p. 346.

absolute sense, no process of reasoning, however broad or logical, whether inductive or deductive, can establish it.

The insufficiency of any induction from known facts or of any deduction from assumed premises to prove God's existence, harmonizes with the belief that God is in the absolute sense the foundation truth. Of no other truth is the evidence so concrete, so forcible, so complete, so authoritative. It is truth the certainty of which is absolute. Theoretic skepticism and theoretic atheism are indeed possible, but atheism and skepticism each stands forth convicted by its own methods of self-contradiction. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."¹ All reasoning, if logical and consistent, proceeds implicitly on the presumption of a first cause, an ultimate self-existent ground of the world. God is the living axiom of all axioms on which the force of all processes of proof depends. Inasmuch as He possesses absolute force for all logical thought, arguments proceeding on other premises do not certify Him; but it is He that certifies the validity of premises on which rational thought proceeds.

Analogous to the self-annunciation of God is the self-authenticating force of triunity to the faith-consciousness and faith-logic of the Christian community. That God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the ultimate and more profound axiomatic truth. It is the broadest postulate of the new creation, of Christian experience, of Christian thought; the postulate which Christian beliefs and Christian doctrines implicitly affirm. On this truth self-consistent theological and Christological enquiry proceeds. When, therefore, I take the position that triunity cannot be proved by reasoning from premises other than God, but that triune

¹ Ps. liii. 1; Ps. xiv. 1.

truth is self-verifying to faith and Christian consciousness, it is not implied that there is any lack of evidence; just the contrary. God in the Christian economy certifies Himself to be triune; and His triunity is the key to the Scripture doctrine on the incarnate Son, and on His Holy Spirit sent forth on the day of Pentecost.

§ 102.

According to the views which have been presented, the dogma concerning divine triunity does not in the first instance rest on the Scriptures of the New Testament. That these books clearly teach triune truth is not a matter of doubt. But they are not the original foundation either of triune truth or of triune doctrine.

1. The belief of the Church that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit is coeval with her origin; being called forth and necessitated by objective historical revelation. That revelation was the presence and manifestation of Father, Son and Spirit; hence the Church, from the day of Pentecost onward, believed in the Triad no less than in the Monad. Her triune faith was the direct perception and recognition of the triune divine reality. From this faith comes the trinal character of apostolic writings. The triune faith of apostles mirrors the triune revelation; and the books of the New Testament mirror the triune faith of evangelists, of apostles, and of all the first living members of the true Vine. Thus growing forth from the Christian life, and shaped by the triune faith of the apostolic Church, the New Testament became the embodiment of triune revelation. The Christian Scriptures did not originate faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; that triune faith is older by many years than

the oldest New Testament book. The triune apostolic faith prompted the preaching of the gospel on the basis of triune divine truth, and prompted all utterances on this mystery contained in inspired books.

2. The apostolic faith was expressed in the formula of Holy Baptism. Converts from Judaism and from paganism on confession of this triune faith were baptized into the triune Name.¹ The triune baptismal confession became the beginning, the germ, of the triune apostolic creed; and the triune creed of apostles has been the invincible faith of the kingdom of Christ in all ages. Faith in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, has been flowing onward from century to century with unbroken continuity.² At no point in history was there occasion for a new warrant for a triune faith, or a new beginning. There never was a time when the Church Catholic was ignorant of fundamental Christian truth. As the books of the New Testament did not in the beginning originate the triune faith, so neither by these books was the triune faith at any epoch afterwards originated. As triune revelation was a perpetual divine self-manifestation in the Spirit, and as the triune faith was a living faith perpetually responsive to triune revelation, the Church never took recourse to the New Testament in order *de novo* to determine whether her faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit was warranted. The relation of triune faith

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19; I Peter iii. 21.

² This unbroken continuity is the consequence of the fulfilment of the words of Jesus Christ: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you." John xiv. 16, 17. "The teaching of the Spirit causes the divine truth to enter into the soul; He gives to it a full reality within us by making us have experience of it; He alone makes the word a truth for us." Godet.

to Scripture is of a different kind. It is the living faith of the Church in the triune God that has ever been one essential qualification for the interpretation of the teachings of the New Testament, and for the firm defence of triune truth against repeated assaults of her enemies.

It is of the *triune faith*, not of the dogma of the trinity, that I am speaking. The dogma as formulated by the Church during the fourth and fifth centuries was the result of continuous efforts of theological thought rationally to express the triune truth affirmed by Christian faith. The living faith, coeval with the origin of the Church, was the perpetual necessity of rational efforts to formulate triune truth consistently, on the one side, with the structure of Christian revelation, and, on the other, with the conditions of Christian thought.

Of course I do not raise the question whether the Christian revelation of God as reflected by the writers of the New Testament is triune. Nor in maintaining that triune faith conditions the triune genius of the New Testament books, do I undervalue the importance of their explicit teaching. Nor yet is it implied that the Scriptures are not in the Reformation sense for us the formal principle of dogmatic theology. I am only emphasizing the significance of the historical fact that the living triune faith antedates the triune teaching concerning God in the writings of evangelists and apostles. Not these inspired books, but Christian faith responsive to objective triune revelation is the original human condition of triune doctrine.¹ Moreover,

¹ The words of Dorner may be quoted in support of the general principle: "Genau genommen kann ohne den Glauben und seine Erfahrung, ohne ein Stellen des Element des Christenthums, auch nicht einmal der biblische und historische Stoff richtig d. h. nach seinem innern Wesen erfasst werden; insofern ist er Vorbedingung der Theologie über-

it is to be noted, that if New Testament books are disconnected from the self-authenticating force of objective triune revelation, they do not logically account for the triune faith. The dogma of the trinity, if we trace it backward to its beginning, will be seen to be rooted in the soil of Christian life; and if rightly studied it will be found that the dogma has always been deriving essential nourishment from this soil. "Religion in the true sense is a *life* in God."¹

§ 103.

What then is the fundamental argument for the trinity of God? The answer in the last instance is this: God by the concrete revelation of Himself in the new creation as Father and Son and Holy Spirit is His own argument.

1. Messianic revelation became completed reality by the glorification of Jesus Christ and the consequent outpouring of His Holy Spirit. In the objective Messianic kingdom God immediately authenticates Himself to be Father and Son and Holy Spirit to all those who by the new creating agency of the Spirit have fellowship with the Father and the Son.² Faith confesses Jesus to be the Christ, the only begotten Son of God the Father. This confession faith makes in the fellowship of the Spirit, who on the one hand searcheth all things, yea the deep things

haupt. Denn ohne ihn fehlt es an der theologischen Sehkraft und dem theologischen Urtheilsvermögen. Dazu kommt, dass er nicht bloss das diesem object entsprechende Auge ist, sondern er hat auch das object der thetischen Theologie zu seinem Inhalt und Eigenthum und trägt die Substanz (*ὑπόστασις*, Heb. xi. 1; iv. 3,) der christlichen Wahrheit keimweise in sich." Glaubenslehre, i. p. 18.

¹ Martensen, Christian Dogmatics, § 4.

² I Cor. ii. 11-13.

of God,¹ and on the other is received by believers in whom He abides. Apprehended of God, and living the new life of fellowship with the Father in the Son by the Spirit, the new-born community is shut up to the triune confession. As the community confesses God to be the one God in opposition to false polytheistic beliefs of the Gentile world, so in distinction from the immature monotheistic belief of Judaism, the community must confess the one God to be Father and Son and Holy Ghost, or three in One. "For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father."²

This triune truth the Church from the beginning confesses in consequence of her intuitive perception of it. Living in triune communion, divine triunity is seen by the eye of the spiritual man; and by the spontaneous action of her regenerate life the Church uninterruptedly affirms and defends her triune confession. Under the constant action of triune revelation, the response of faith has from age to age been triune; in the confession that God is Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, there has been no wavering.³ Extremely difficult has it been adequately to

¹ I Cor. ii. 10.

² Dr. Henry B. Smith justly compares the realm of grace with the realm of nature: "Just as in the investigation of nature a consideration of the reality of the natural world is at the basis of all our researches, so, in the study of Christian theology, a living sense of the reality of a divine revelation is at the foundation of all right studies. . . Christian theology has to do with a real order of things as much as have the natural sciences. . . There is ever to be maintained a Christian realism in distinction from that nominalism which makes the whole of Christian theology to be a dispute about words." *Introduction to Christian Theology*, p. 26.

³ Sufficient evidence we have in the fact that from the third century onward to our time the Apostles' Creed has been used by all branches of the Church, Catholic and Protestant. No denomination of Evan-

formulate the triune reality for thought ; but as regards the confession of the triune reality itself there have been no debates. In opposition to all criticisms of unchristological philosophy, the confession of the triune creed has in the historic branches of the Church Catholic been firmly maintained through all the centuries. Her position has never been doubtful.

2. Much uncertainty and doubt on the fundamental mystery have been prevalent in the *science* of theology. The question arises: How is triune divine truth to be construed? What is an adequate rational formula of the objective revelation? The solution of the problem must answer on the one hand to the intuitive confession of Christian faith, and on the other to legitimate demands of the human reason. What is the solution that will satisfy this twofold requirement? It is the endeavor of theologians to answer this question that has provoked intense conflicts.

Here there has been, at times, much wavering and indecision ; various divergent opinions have been developed. Any construction of triune revelation, which by its implications and logical consequences is seen to be at variance with triune truth is an error. Errors are of two classes.

One class arises when thought lays false emphasis on the essential *unity* of the Godhead. Then we have Sabelianism, different grades of Arianism, Unitarianism, and all those forms of apprehension which overlook the objective significance of trinal distinctions. The other class arises from opposite one-sidedness. False emphasis is put

gelical Protestantism dissents from its trinal structure. Nor has any branch of the Church ever failed to baptize in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

on divine trinality. Then we get tritheistic, or even tetra-theistic theories. The one class violates the catholic faith in Father, and Son, and Spirit ; the other violates faith in the one only God.

In both cases there is in the Christian Church an intuitive sense of wrong done the Christian God-idea. Sooner or later re-action ensues. In opposition to violence done the objective significance of trinal distinctions the consciousness of faith constrains the affirmation that Father, and Son, and Spirit are different, yet co-equal and co-eternal. In opposition to violence done to divine unity, faith constrains the affirmation that God is one God, the essential and undivided One. The living faith of the Christian Church ever affirms both forms of Christian revelation as necessary parts of the divine Truth.

These contrary errors have sometimes been sustained by acute and forcible arguments, some drawn from philosophy, others from Scripture, sustained during certain periods in the history of the Church with seemingly so much convincing force, and they acquired such commanding influence that the perpetuity of the catholic faith was threatened. Yet the intuitive perception of the wholeness of triune truth has ever stood the Church in good stead. Christian consciousness, generated and always nourished by living faith in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, is wronged alike by a denial of the objective co-equal Three as by a denial of the undivided One ; and the Christian community has ever instinctively resisted either wrong done the holy mystery. Whilst theological thought may have wavered, diverging at one time toward one misapprehension, and at another to an opposite misconstruction, Christian faith has been firm, confessing the one God manifested in Jesus Christ to be the Father, and the Son,

and the Holy Ghost, even when the confession was persistently assailed by the psychic reason.

3. This immediate self-evidencing force of Christian revelation, centering in the divine-human personality of Jesus Christ, is, historically considered, the original argument, and, logically considered, the profoundest argument for divine triunity.

The triune reality evoked and necessitated triune faith in the beginning. The same positive force of the triune reality necessitated triune faith in subsequent ages. The same self-evidencing force commands the same faith now. With the directness characterizing the apostolic age, triune truth continuously and uninterruptedly necessitates triune faith.

The necessity of triune faith is twofold. It is positive. Faith in Christ is faith in Him as the Son of God incarnate. Faith in the incarnate Son is faith in the Father, and this faith in God the Father, and God the Son, is a faith awakened and maintained by the presence of the Spirit. Spirit, Son, Father, each inheres in the object of Christian faith ; each is a member of Christian truth ; each is wrought into the foundation of Christian hope. The necessity is also negative. The structure of Christian revelation forbids the elimination of either member. Faith knows each member to be essential to the organic whole ; and, therefore, pertinaciously resists any dismemberment or mutilation of the God-idea.

This direct and necessary faith of the Church, that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, informs and upholds the trinitarian dogma. Whether wrought out in a formula satisfying to Christian reason or not, the life and consciousness of the Church demands and commands a self-consistent doctrine on triunity. Animated and ruled by the con-

sciousness of faith, dogmatic thought is impelled from within to recognize the triune idea as fundamental to sound Christian theology. There is no alternative. Objective triunity is necessarily pre-supposed by the unique order of revelation, being involved in the process of its development and in the whole economy of redemption.

Thus internally related to faith-consciousness, the dogma that the true God eternally exists in the unity of three personal principles, has ever been able to maintain itself against the superficial objections of the natural understanding, and in spite of all defective dogmatic formulas. In some approved mode of construction the dogma maintains itself, not because Christian reason has adequately grasped triune truth, nor because theology claims that a logical formula of triunity is given by the New Testament, but because the faith in One who is Three, faith in one God who is tri-personal, is ever, through the immanent energy of the Holy Spirit, living in the communion of the Church, the body of the risen Christ glorified. The internal *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* cannot perish. As the ever-living faith quickens Christian consciousness, this consciousness cannot but prompt and mould some rational form of apprehension.¹ Triune consciousness gives impulse to triune thought; and triune thought must bear fruit in a triune doctrine.

¹ The logical necessity of passing from triune faith to a triune doctrine Martensen expresses forcibly: "Is it possible to conceive of God as eternal self-consciousness without conceiving of Him as eternally *making Himself His own object*? When, therefore, following in the footsteps of the Church, we teach that not merely the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit eternally pre-existed and are independent of creation, we say that God could not be the self-revealed, self-living God, unless He had eternally distinguished Himself into I and Thou (into Father and Son), and unless He had eternally comprehended Himself as the Spirit of Love, who proceeds forth from that relation of antithesis in the Divine essence." *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 107.

II. ARGUMENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

§ 104.

The force of the argument for triunity drawn from the New Testament depends very much on method. If conducted consistently with just conceptions of Christianity and of the relation that Christianity, the new creation in Christ, bears to inspired writings, the argument is convincing.

Theology may diverge in two directions. False emphasis may be put on Scripture teaching; the books may be subjected to an abstract construction. This has been the more prevalent divergence. Another error arises from one-sided emphasis put on the immediate communion of Christ glorified in the Spirit with the Church. Then Scripture teaching is undervalued. This is the error into which some phases of mysticism have been drawn.

The legitimate force of the argument from the New Testament may be presented when theology recognizes the wide difference and the vital connection between the historical process of revelation in the person and work of Christ and the books written by the inbreathing of His Holy Spirit.

1. Many theologians have looked primarily and exclusively to the books of the Old and New Testaments for evidence to support the Church dogma. This method contravenes the historical order of truth. The Christian Church is undoubtedly older than any book of the New Testament. Triune truth was firmly held during the long interval between Pentecost and the time when epistles and gospels were written.¹ Hence as regards the triune God-

¹ Paul's Epistles to the Church of the Thessalonians are the earliest of his writings, and the oldest portions of the New Testament. They

idea, the books of the New Testament cannot have accorded to them either original or exclusive force. These books did not originate the faith of the Church that God is Three in One ; instead, the books pre-suppose and reflect this triune faith. As they did not in the apostolic age originate this unique faith, so they cannot now be the original source of the dogma or the ultimate ground on which the dogma rests.

The faith of the apostolic churches and the consciousness developed from this faith preceded the triune idea as expressed in the New Testament books. The consciousness of faith must also have preceded the construction of all dogmatic formulas. This relation of the consciousness developed from faith to the logical construction of the divine contents of faith is the same in every age of the Church. However valuable, and forcible, and necessary the Christian Scriptures may be, they do no more than complement and characterize the direct witness of the triune God to Himself in the hearts of His people.

The opinion that conclusive proof of triunity is to be found only in the written word, instead of giving firm support to this fundamental truth, in reality weakens the force of the legitimate argument derived from New Tes-

were probably written near the close of A. D. 52 or the beginning of 53, from Corinth, that is, written not less than *twenty-two* years after Pentecost. Under the oral teaching of apostles, prophets and evangelists the Christian Church for nearly a quarter of a century confessed the triune faith, and grew intensively and extensively, without the Christian Scriptures. The Gospel of John was probably composed at Ephesus between A. D. 70 and 95. His Epistles were written after the Gospel. Dr. Lange assigns them between the years 96 and 100. According to the judgment of the foremost biblical scholars, more than a half century elapsed before the New Testament volume was completed. Christian truth under the tuition of the Spirit lived in the hearts of believers.

tament books.¹ It is equivalent to the assumption that the Church affirms triune truth, not because faith in the one true God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit was immediately necessitated by triune objective revelation in consequence of which triune faith lived in her communion from the day of Pentecost onward, but because the gospels and epistles, indited many years later, set forth God as One in Three. Then it would follow that the trinitarian principle is not primary, not essential, nor fundamental in the economy of the new creation. It would follow, moreover, that the Christian Church was founded, organized and developed, and that she extended her triumphs over a large part of the civilized world without holding the triune idea of God. If the apostolic Church was born and organized without the trinitarian faith; if the original consciousness of the Christian community did not necessarily include it, then there is a presumption against the doctrine of triunity. Further, if we should have to concede that apostolic preaching was not based on the triune faith, and that the triune faith did not distinguish the apostolic Churches, there would be good ground for the allegation that the trinitarian theology of the third and fourth centuries was a corruption of original Christian teaching.

¹ Dr. Henry B. Smith says of the Church that it "rests for its foundation on Christ, as having revealed God's will and made redemption for sin, that is, on supernatural facts which centre in the person and work of Jesus Christ." . . . "The Christian Church has the books of the Old and the New Testament, so called, which all centre in and refer to Christ and the redemption accomplished through Him. . . . These records exhibit as the great central object, the person and character of Christ. . . . Christianity presents itself not as a system of philosophy, not as a speculation, but as a series of divine facts, in the course of human history, introduced by divine supernatural agency. This is one of the strongholds of the Christian system." *Introduction to Christian Theology*, pp. 140, 141.

2. But it is just as important to avoid false divergence in the contrary direction. The argument from the gospels and epistles must not be underrated. If not original and primary, the argument from Scripture is nevertheless complementary and *necessary*. In its place, the teaching of the New Testament on the divine constitution is indispensable.

The original Christian consciousness is reflected in the books of the New Testament. On this point there is no room for question. Hence, if the triune idea did not underlie and pervade these books, the absence of it could be accounted for only on the ground that faith in God as One in Three did not distinguish the religion and teaching of the apostolic Church; and from this non-trinal consciousness of God, the legitimate inference would be that the objective revelation of God in Jesus Christ was not a unitrinal revelation.

To put this thought in positive form: If the completed revelation was the revelation of One in Three, if in consequence the apostolic Churches had a triune faith and a triune consciousness of God, then this triune faith and consciousness could not but gain definite expression in the inspired books of evangelists and apostles.

Christian revelation is a historical process that apprehends and possesses the subjects whom it addresses and wins; authenticating its contents to the hearts of believers, it makes them partakers of its own life and genius.¹ Inasmuch as a supernatural revelation pre-supposes man's

¹ In both, the "Incarnate Word" and the "Written Word," says Tayler Lewis, "we have the infinite in the finite, the divine in the human, the ineffable in the forms of sense, the essential as exhibited in the phenomenal,—the absolute, the eternal, the unconditioned as represented in the relative, the temporal, the flowing images of time and space." *The Divine-Human in the Scriptures*, p. 5.

spiritual receptivity no less than the positive activity of God; revelation is really a revelation only in as far as its subjects apprehend its contents. A revelation that did not authenticate itself with convincing force to the receptive hearts of its adopted subjects would not be to them a revelation. The Christian consciousness of evangelists and apostles must accordingly be the mirror of objective Christian truth. Were the idea of divine triunity wanting in the living mirror of Christianity, this idea would be wanting also in the New Creation itself. For us, therefore, the reflection of the constitution of God in Holy Scripture, particularly in the books of the New Testament, is equivalent to the original manifestation.

We shall not, however, find in New Testament books the dogmatic formulas of divine triunity as given in the creeds and confessions of the Church. A formula or rational expression of triune truth, is the product of theological thought; and theological thought passes through a succession of historical periods. The product will vary at different epochs, and is perfectible. In Scripture may be found only the living root from which the formulas of Christian thought have grown forth. The living root is the faith that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This faith as set forth by the different writers does not vary. Though expressed in manifold ways, it is the same in all. It is this original faith, or the unique import of this faith, that the inspired books of the New Testament embody, not the dogma.

3. The force of the argument from Scripture depends very much upon the manner in which the argument is conducted. Some passages—like Matt. iii. 16, 17; Matt. xxviii. 19; John xv. 26; John xvi. 13–15; I Cor. xii. 4–6; II Cor. xiii. 14; and Eph. ii. 18—are more definite and complete than

many others; but the legitimate evidence does not lie in single texts found here and there, as if in some places the words of the writers imply or teach the doctrine of triunity whilst in others they do not. The more important and forcible passages are to be regarded merely as a fuller declaration of the fundamental truth which intones all the books. No texts, even the most explicit, are a *sine qua non*. The faith of the Church that the true God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit does not hinge on the genuineness of a word or letter, nor on the interpretation of any given phraseology. When with narrow and undue tenacity theology contends for *θεός* in I Tim. iii. 16 instead of *ὁς*, trinitarian doctrine loses more strength than it gains. The *textus receptus* is to be given up at any passage just so soon as sound biblical criticism has satisfactorily shown that it is unwarranted.

In God as manifested by Christian revelation the original Christian faith discerned, not the mathematical unit, but the One in Three. This vision of faith gives tone to every book, every chapter, every sentence. Faithful Christians of to-day are, like the apostles, living members of the same Vine; they are joined to Christ by the same Holy Spirit; and in the Spirit they see by the eye of faith the same divine self-manifestation. This firm faith sustains enquiry into the representations of Scripture by which it is shown that, like the Father, the Son is God, the Spirit is God. As the apostolic faith conditions the apostolic writings, so does the vision of faith, shared now as well as then by spiritual minds, condition true insight into the import of these writings and guide just interpretation.

§ 105.

The argument from Scripture for divine triunity consists in the general idea concerning the Godhead as it comes to view with greater or less definiteness in all the books of the New Testament. These books contain no abstract doctrine on God, either as One or as Three in One. The general truth that God is triune underlies and pervades divine self-manifestation in the mediatorship of Christ. The constitution of the Godhead is manifested in the history of the new creation. As in this history the person of Jesus Christ is central, the position which He occupies Godward and man-ward is the hinge on which the Scripture argument turns. The argument includes the following points:

1. Jesus who is represented as the only begotten Son, uniformly distinguishes Himself as a personal being from the Father as personal. The two, Father and Son, are never identified. The Son never declares that He is the Father. Nor is there any declaration to the effect that the Father is the Son.

2. Distinct and different from the Father, the Son is nevertheless co-equal, co-eternal, co-essential. The divine position, the qualities and the mediatorship of the Son are set forth on the assumption that the Son and the Father are in the same sense God.

Scripture teaching with respect to the dignity of the Son includes several elements: 1. That the Son was pre-existent; He existed before He became man. 2. That the Son was premundane; He was before the foundation of the world. 3. That He exists eternally,

or in the form of divine existence, ὅς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπαλάσκει.¹

3. The Son as personal is distinguished from the Holy Spirit as personal. The distinction and difference are in some places clearly expressed, and when not clearly expressed, the difference is pre-supposed and implied. There is no declaration that the Son is the Holy Spirit, nor that the Holy Spirit is the Son ; the two, the Son and the Holy Spirit, are in no instance identified.²

4. As the Son is distinguished from the Father and from the Holy Spirit, so the Holy Spirit is distinguished from the Father and the Son. It is nowhere assumed or implied that the Holy Spirit is the Father, any more than that the Son is the Father.

5. With the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is co-equal, co-eternal, co-essential. The New Testament books assume that the Holy Spirit is a being who is divine and personal. The assumption is involved in all that is said of the Son in His relation to the Spirit, and in all

¹ Phil. ii. 6.

² The only seeming exception is II Cor. iii. 17: *Now the Lord is the Spirit*: ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστίν. Studied in the light of the context these words may not be understood to teach the hypothetical identity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the very next clause the Spirit is spoken of as the Spirit of the Lord, οὗ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου, ἐλευθερία. The *Lord* and the *Spirit* are distinguished. *Ἐλευθερία* begotten not by the Lord, but by the *Spirit* of the Lord, implies hypothetical difference. The "Lord is the Spirit" inasmuch as in and by the Spirit the Lord is ever imparting Himself to, and living in, His members. In them the Spirit is the principle of the inhabitation of Christ, so that the new life which under one aspect is the fellowship of Christ is necessarily under another aspect the fellowship of the Spirit.* Bengel says: "Where Christ is, there is the Spirit of Christ; where the Spirit of Christ is, there is Christ."

* Cf. Meyer's Comm. *in loco*.

that is directly taught of the Spirit in His office and His relations.

6. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit come to view at many places in organic conjunction. The Son and the Spirit, personally distinguished from each other and from the Father, move on the same super-creatural plane. Maintaining their personal distinctions, they are active in the same divine transactions.

These several propositions, the teaching of the New Testament in manifold forms satisfactorily sustains. The full force of the argument is seen, not in its bearing on any one of these propositions taken by itself, but in the support given to all as essential parts of the whole truth.

§ 106.

Jesus Christ as set forth by the Gospels uniformly distinguishes Himself from the Father and from the Holy Spirit. The same distinction is taught, and, when not taught, it is assumed and recognized by the authors of the Acts of the Apostles, of the Epistles and the Apocalypse. The distinction is personal, and commonly made under a form that implies the oneness and co-equality of the Son and the Father.

1. To the virgin the announcement was made that she should bring forth a son, and He should be called the Son of the Highest, to whom the Lord God would give the throne of His father David.¹ It was the only-begotten One who became flesh, not God the Father.² The glory of the Son men beheld ; but God as Father 'no man hath seen at any time.'³ The Son came down from heaven. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten

¹ Luke i. 31-33.

² John i. 14.

³ John i. 18.

Son. Himself in the person of the Father¹ God did not give. The Son comes into the world, not to do His own will, but to do the will of the Father that sent Him.² Coming to do the will of His Father, the Son comes freely. It is His will to do the will of the Father.³

The same difference and the same harmony between the Son and the Father, between the will of the Son and the will of the Father appear in the agony of Gethsemane. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."⁴ The will of the Son differs from the will of the Father, yet in the act of praying that the 'cup' may 'pass away' the Son freely subordinates Himself to, and acquiesces in the authority of the Father. Equally prominent is the same difference and harmony in the high-priestly prayer. "Father, the hour is come : Glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee . . . I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do."⁵ The obedience of the Son to the will of His Father in heaven moves the Son to humble Himself and become 'obedient unto death.'⁶ These are but a few of the many places that directly teach the hypostatic difference between the Father and the Son.

The only begotten Son, incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, is living, teaching, suffering on earth in performing His mediatorial work ; but God the Father is not on earth ; He is in heaven.

The same difference may be clearly seen in the attitude

¹ John iii. 13, 16.

² John iv. 34; John v. 30; John vi. 38, 40.

³ Heb. x. 5-9.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 39, 42; Mark xiv. 36, 39; Luke xxii. 42.

⁵ John xvii.

⁶ Phil. ii. 8.

of the Father towards the Son. To fulfill all righteousness Jesus is baptized of His forerunner, John. Then, having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove upon Him, and a voice came out of heaven: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."¹ A similar declaration in the record of the Transfiguration involves the same personal difference. "And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my Son, my chosen: hear ye him."² The Father which sent the Son bears witness of the Son; the Son does not bear witness of Himself.³ "If I bear witness of myself," He says, "my witness is not true." The Father glorifies the Son, and the Son glorifies the Father.⁴

These citations may stand as illustrations of the whole tenor of the New Testament. The truth which they emphasize is the *difference* between the Father in heaven as personal and the incarnate Son as personal. The Father is in the Son, but the Son is not the Father. The Son is in the Father, but the Father is not the Son.⁵ The writers are of one mind in abstaining from all words or phraseol-

¹ Matt. iii. 17; Mark i. 11; Luke iii. 22. On the difference between the words of the 'Voice' as given by Matthew and Luke, Godet remarks: "According to Luke . . . the divine declaration is addressed to Jesus: '*Thou* art my Son . . . ; in *Thee* I am well pleased.' In Matthew it has the form of a testimony addressed to a third party touching Jesus: '*This is* my Son . . . in whom . . . The first form is that in which God spoke to Jesus; the second, that in which John became conscious of the divine manifestation. . . . From this moment Jesus must have felt Himself the supreme object of the love of the infinite God." Comm. on Luke, p. 120. The variation of Luke (and Mark) from Matthew strengthens the force of the representation by both of the fact that the Father and the Son are personally different and stand in different relations.

² Matt. xvii. 5; Mark ix. 7; Luke ix. 35.

³ John v. 32, 37.

⁴ John xvii. 4, 5.

⁵ John xiv. 10, 11; xvii. 21-23.

ogy that in any way countenance or suggest the sentiment that the Son is the Father, or that the Father and the Son are the same *ego*.

So marked is the difference between the Father and the Son that reasoning from one class of data of the New Testament it is easier with Socinians to hold that Father and Son represent two orders of existence than with Sabellius or Swedenborg to maintain that Father and Son express only divergent manifestations of a single objective hypostasis.

2. The difference between the Father and the Son is but one element of New Testament teaching. The opposite truth comes into view with equal clearness. The representations of personal difference pre-suppose indissoluble unity and essential equality.

Whilst all books of the New Testament imply that Father and Son are in the same sense divine, there are some books, as before noted, in which the personal dignity of the Son is especially prominent. To bring out the full force of the argument from the New Testament, it would be necessary to examine these books severally and at length. But I can do no more than use some of the classic passages, such as John i. 1-18; Col. i. 15-20; Phil. ii. 5-11; Heb. i. and ii.; John xiv. xv. xvi. xvii.

3. The Word that became flesh was in the beginning, *ἐν ἀρχῇ*. *Ἀρχή* denotes the point when 'the heaven and the earth' began to exist. Then the Logos *was*, *ἦν*; not *ἐγένετο*, was made. All things were made by the Logos. Things became through Him, *δι' αὐτοῦ*; implying and affirming that when 'all things' began the Logos was. He through whom all things began, the same was in the beginning with God. Says Bengel: "This is thunder brought to us from the Son of Thunder." . . . "While

adopting *ἐν ἀρχῇ* from Gen. i. 1, John elevates it from its reference to a point of time, the beginning of creation, to the time of absolute pre-existence; *before any creation* . . . It is therefore equal to, *before the world was*, ch. xvii. 5. This *beginning* had no beginning."¹ "These words," says Alford, "if they do not *assert*, at least *imply* the *eternal pre-existence* of the Divine Word. For *ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν* is not said of an *act done*, *ἐν ἀρχῇ* (as in Gen. i. 1), but of a *state existing ἐν ἀρχῇ*, and therefore without beginning itself."²

The same truth Paul expresses, when he says: "who is the image of the invisible God,"³ the first-born of all creation;⁴ for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."⁵ The Son is the eternal *archetype* of the universe, no less than the *organ* of its existence, and the ultimate *end* of world-history. As by the Son all things were created, so by the Son it is the good pleasure of the Father to reconcile all things upon the earth and all things in the heavens to Himself.⁶ The office of the Son as the reconciler and peacemaker is co-extensive with the office of the Son as the Organ of creation.

¹ Bengel's Gnomon on John i. 1-3.

² Alford on John i. 1; Cf. John xvii. 24; Eph. i. 4; Prov. viii. 23.

³ Bengel: "He, who sees the Son, sees the Father, in *the face* of Christ. The Son exactly represents, and reflects the Father." Gnomon on II Cor. iv. 4.

⁴ *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*, is the comparative genitive, denoting the Son as born *before* all creation. Cf. Meyer. Here the *πρωτότοκος* of Paul, expresses the *contrast* of the First-Begotten with the 'all things' as His creation. ⁵ Col. i. 15-17. ⁶ Col. i. 20.

Fully consistent with the unlimited range of the work of reconciliation stands His claim to universal authority as asserted in the apostolic commission: "All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth."¹ His authority in relation to the cosmos is absolute, prevailing alike over nature and over the transcendent spiritual realm. He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet.²

The metaphysical oneness, if not formally expressed, is necessarily involved in the mode in which the Scriptures teach that the Word who became flesh is the only begotten Son of God. We beheld His glory, St. John says, glory as of the only begotten from the Father.³ *Only begotten* expresses a relation of the Son to the Father which is pre-mundane, metaphysical, organic. For it is the evident purpose of the Apostle to affirm that the glory of the Word made flesh was the immediate manifestation of the God-head. Meyer says: "He is called *the only begotten Son*, as He, *out of whom* or *apart from whom*, the Father has no sons."

An equivalent utterance we have in the words of St. Paul: When the fullness of time came God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.⁴ The original is: ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ. The full force of the two prepositions, ἐξ and ἀπό, in composition with the verb, is not given by the English "sent forth." Meyer

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18. "An expression of His glorification and victory. The primary reference is to His authority as Mediator, extending over all in heaven and on earth, *for His Church*. It 'was given' by the Father, to Him as the God-man, though as the Eternal Word, He had such glory before the foundation of the world. Before the resurrection the disciples were not ready for this revelation, nor had the victory of the God-man been won." Schaff's Com. on Matt. xxviii. 18. Cf. Luke xxiv. 26; Phil. ii. 9; Rom. xiv. 9; Eph. i. 20; iv. 10; I Cor. xv. 25.

² I Cor. xv. 25; Ps. viii; Heb. ii. 7-9; Eph. i. 20-23, I Peter iii. 22.

³ John i. 14.

⁴ Gal. iv. 4.

renders this compound verb : *Er sandte von sich aus*; the Father sent forth from Himself the Son; an expression which implies that in His pre-incarnate dignity the Son was the only begotten One living in the bosom of the Father. "The expression," says Meyer, "pre-supposes the idea of the personal pre-existence of Christ, and therewith at the same time His personal divine nature; so that *in reality* the apostle's idea coincides with the Johannean $\acute{o} \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \tilde{\eta}\nu \pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\nu \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\nu$ and $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma \tilde{\eta}\nu \acute{o} \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$."

5. The passage in the Epistle to the Philippians¹ sets forth the threefold state of Christ, or three periods in the history of the Son: 1. His pre-incarnate dignity; 2. His incarnation and humiliation; 3. His transcendence, or His post-resurrection dignity.

Of His pre-incarnate state, Paul says: "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." In the heavenly realm the pre-incarnate Son, living in the God-form, was on an equality with God. The equality asserted by the Son was not robbery. He did not wrong God. In communion with God He did not appropriate to Himself a dignity that was not by nature His own. Equal with God as to His essence, He was clothed in the God-form; His divine essence and His divine form being commensurate and reciprocal.

The transition from the heavenly glory to the earthly humiliation has two sides, the one negative the other positive; from the God-form He passes to the man-form, from the plane of divine equality in majesty and authority to the plane of a servant. During the period of His incarnate history on earth His pre-incarnate God-equality is not in

¹ Phil. ii. 5-11.

reality hidden, but manifested in the unique humility and faultless obedience of the ideal man. The glory of the God-form, not divine glory in human form, belongs to the heavenly realm. In His earthly history the equality of the Son with God as to essence and form is manifested, but not seen by Jews nor Gentiles. Says John: We beheld his glory. Being made in the likeness of men, God-equality is realized under a character before unknown and unimagined, in the obedience of love unto the death of the cross, in the victory of the resurrection, and the exaltation of Jesus above every name, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow."¹

Paul's words as to the pre-mundane existence of the Son and His pre-incarnate equality with God are direct and explicit. He says: ὅς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ᾔψήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ. His pre-existence was in the form of God inasmuch as He was God's equal. The *kenosis* is not a relinquishment of His God-equality either as to form or substance. *Kenosis* was the act of transition from the uncreated divine glory to the finite creature-realm in fashion as a man, the ceasing to live purely in the existence-form of transcendent Godhead. Positively apprehended, *kenosis* was His infleshment or the embodiment of the God-equality of the Son in the existence-form of a *servant*. But this infleshment, or to use the words of Martensen,

"this self-humiliation must be at the same time regarded as His self-perfection; for through His revelation in the flesh He first became, in the full sense of the term, 'Lord to the glory of God the Father.' The idea of the deity of the Son is the *idea* of the Revealer of God, of the Mediator between God and the creature; but He *is* in the deepest sense the mediating God, not for the first creation, but for the second;

¹ Phil. ii. 9; Eph. i. 21.

not for the kingdom of nature, but for the kingdom of grace and love; and He only becomes the ruler in the kingdom of love on the ground of His having appropriated human nature as His own."¹

6. Of like force is the address of Christ to His Father in the high-priestly prayer: "I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The words embody a unique personal consciousness, based on pre-mundane personal co-existence, a metaphysical equality in glory. *Καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σὺ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί.* In this prayer several things are to be noted:

(a.) The *difference* between the Father and the Son; the Father is in heaven, the Son is incarnate on earth.

(b.) This difference is *personal*; it is expressed by the personal pronouns, *σὺ* and *μέ*; O Father, glorify *thou me* with thine own *self*.

(c.) His pre-incarnate and *premundane* consciousness; the Son was with the Father before the world was, *πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι.*

(d.) The consciousness of possessing the glory of the Father in His premundane existence; glorify thou me with the glory which *I had with thee*. The glory which the Son had with the Father before the world was, as here implied, is the full equivalent of the transcendent truth of Paul's affirmation that in the pre-incarnate state Christ was 'in the form of God.' These two propositions: *ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων* and *παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον παρὰ σοί,* embody the same idea, the one denoting form, or mode of divine life, the other denoting contents, or self-existent life in light.

¹ Martensen's Dogmatics, p. 265.

(c.) The consciousness of being one with the Father. The prayer of Jesus Christ to be glorified with the glory of the Father implies co-equal *capability* and co-equal *right*.

The Son did not aspire after a dignity that was not by nature His due; He had no sense of robbery; the idea implied is the full equivalent of the words of Paul, οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ᾗγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. The uniqueness of the prayer culminates in the formula, παρὰ σεαυτοῦ;¹ glorify thou me with thine own self. The words can mean no less than this, that whilst the Father and the Son are personally different, the Son is conscious of possessing *identity of being* with the Father, or, as Paul expresses it, that the Son lives His life on an equality with God.

These two passages: John xvii. 5 and Phil. ii. 5, 6, when compared, reciprocally explain and sustain each other. Taken together, they are a forcible expression of distinctive Christological truth that in the realm of absolute self-existence the Father and the Son are hypostatically distinct, yet ontologically the same. This meaning can be set aside only by doing violence to the words of our Lord and His apostle.

¹ "By the words: *with thyself*, Jesus opposes the divine sphere to that in which He is at present living (*on the earth*, v. 4.), xiii. 32—the expression: *the glory which I had*, is opposed to this present humiliation. No doubt, in His human state He has also a glory, even a glory 'as that of the only begotten Son having come from the Father' (i. 14). But it differs from His heavenly glory as the dependent form of the human existence differs from the autonomous form of the divine existence. This filial position in relation to God, which He has as man, is only a reflection of the filial position which He has had as God." Godet *in loco*.

§ 107.

The equality of the Son with the Father implies that of the Father and the Son the same divine qualities are predicable.

1. God the Father is Spirit.¹ The incarnate Son also is Spirit.² The Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.³ In the Logos who became flesh was life, and the life was the light of men.

God is light.⁴ The Son is the light of the world.⁵ God the Father dwells in light which no man can approach unto. That light shines forth in the Son. Those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

God is love.⁶ Absolute love lives in the Son, and is manifested by the Son. The Son loves the Father as the Father loves the Son ;⁷ and as the Father loves the Son so the Son loves His disciples. The unique quality of God's love appears in this, that He gave His Son, that through His death and resurrection the world might be saved.⁸ The love of the Son to the world is the same in kind. It is manifest in this marvellous transaction : the Son of His own will lays down His life to redeem His enemies. He says : I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself.⁹

2. Sharing with the Father the deepest qualities of the

¹ John iv. 24.² II Cor. iii. 6, 8, 17.³ John v. 26.⁴ I Tim. vi. 16.⁵ John viii. 12.⁶ I John iv. 8, 16.⁷ John xv. 9, 12, 13; John xvii. 24.⁸ John iii. 16; x. 10-15.⁹ John x. 15, 17, 18; Heb. x. 7-9.

divine nature, life, light, love, the Son by necessary implication shares with the Father all things that the Father hath.¹

The Son works in the kingdom of nature and in the history of man even until now as the Father works.² The activity, the knowledge, and authority of the Son are commensurate with the activity, the knowledge and authority of the Father. For what things soever the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner.³ Like the Father, the Son quickeneth whom He will. To the Son all judgment is given.⁴ The Son is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.⁵ Therefore all men are bound to honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.⁶ Possessing the same life, the same creative energy, the same authority, the Son and the Father lay claim to the same homage.

These references might be multiplied indefinitely. The essential unity of the Son with the Father is the pre-supposition underlying all the New Testament books. Expressed in some places less forcibly than in others, it is nowhere ignored. All teaching respecting creation and providence, respecting redemption, the second advent and the final consummation of history, respecting the perfection of the righteous and the condemnation of the wicked, involves this fundamental principle, that Jesus, the incarnate Mediator, has a two-fold constitution, being the only-begotten Son of God in the Son of Man, as truly divine as He is really human.

¹ Matt. xi. 27.

² John v. 17, 36.

³ John v. 19; Cf. John i. 18; iii. 13.

⁴ John v. 21, 22, 27; Cf. Matt. xxv. 31-40.

⁵ Rev. i. 8; xxii. 13; Heb. xiii. 8.

⁶ John v. 23.

§ 108.

Agreeably to the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Father and the Son ; this distinction is personal. The Spirit is *Ego*; He is the unity of divine freedom and divine knowledge. Distinct as to personality, there is no distinction as to being. The essence of the Father and the Son is the essence of the Holy Spirit.

1. As it is the office of the Spirit in the realm of aseity to be the *νοινωρία* of the Father and the Son, and in the economy of grace to be the *νοινωρία* of the incarnate Son glorified with His mystical body, the divine personality of the Spirit and His co-essentiality with the Father are not equally explicit. Metaphysical relations are pre-supposed and implied rather than expressed.

Many passages that teach the hypostatic difference between the Son and the Father teach also the hypostatic difference of the Holy Spirit from both. On this question four entire chapters of the gospel by John, 14, 15, 16, 17, furnish rich sources of evidence ; though the force of the implicit teaching of the Synoptists, the Acts and the Epistles, is not to be overlooked.

The Paraclete is given by the Father in answer to the intercession of the Son that He may abide with His disciples for ever.¹ The Spirit proceeds from the Father, and is sent by the Son. If Jesus does not go away, we are taught, the Comforter will not come; but if Jesus departs He will send the Comforter.² Not until Jesus has been glorified can the Spirit proceed from the Father.³ Not

¹ John xiv. 16, 26.

² John xvi. 7.

³ John vii. 39. " Until the day of Pentecost, the Spirit had acted *on* men both in the Old Covenant and in the circle of the disciples; but

until the Spirit has been received will the disciples have power to be witnesses of Christ.¹ Therefore, after the ascension of Christ the disciples did not proclaim Him, but they assembled in an upper room in Jerusalem, where with one accord they continued in prayer, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise.² The gift of the Holy Spirit, the miracle of Pentecost, has fundamental significance for the history of revelation. The advent of the Son by conception and birth, and the advent of the Holy Spirit after Christ's resurrection and ascension are marked by the New Testament as epochs different in kind.

2. The difference of the Spirit from the Father and the Son is implied by His *office*. Nowhere of Him is incarnation predicated. God in the person of His Son became man, not God in the person of the Spirit. By the agency of the Holy Spirit the Son is conceived and born.³ Through the same divine agency the Son is by God the Father sealed.⁴

Of the Spirit no act of redemption is predicated. The incarnate Son, in distinction from the Spirit and from the Father, alone is the Redeemer.

The Spirit is the mediating Paraclete by whom the life of the Son becomes the life of His people, and by whom the redemption achieved by the Son becomes their

He was not yet *in* them as a possession and personal life. . . . It is neither the expiatory death nor the bodily disappearance which are laid down as the condition of Pentecost; it is the positive glorification of Jesus, His reinstatement, as man, in His glory as Logos. It is this supreme position which renders Him capable of disposing of the Spirit and of sending Him to His own." Godet *in loco*.

The difference between Jesus and the Spirit is as definitely marked as the difference between Jesus and His disciples.

¹ Acts i. 8.

² Acts i. 4, 13.

³ Matt. i. 18; Luke i. 35.

⁴ Matt. iii. 16, 17; John vi. 27. Cf. § 90. 1, 2.

possession.¹ "The work of the Spirit," says Godet, "consists in making Christ Himself live in the heart of the believer." The Spirit glorifies the Son; for "He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you."² Grace passes to men from the glorified Meditator, not immediately, but in and through the Holy Spirit. On John xvi. 14, Bengel makes the terse remark: "The economy of the Three Witnesses: The Son glorifies the Father; the Holy Spirit the Son." This truth underlies the discourses and the sacerdotal prayer of our Lord, as recorded in chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the gospel by John.³

Agreeably to these teachings of Christ, the office of the Spirit is distinct from, yet commensurate with the love of the Father and the mediatorial work of the Son. Of all life and blessing the Father is the source; of Him are all things and we unto Him.⁴ He is neither incarnate, nor is He the Comforter.⁵ The Father gives the Son to become by the Spirit the last Adam, the head of a regenerate race, the Founder of the kingdom of heaven. As by the Spirit the Son was conceived and born, so by the Spirit men are born into His kingdom.

These distinctions logically involve personal difference; not merely a difference of the Spirit as to power and wisdom, or as to relations, but a difference of will and of office. The Spirit, agreeably to these testimonies, is a *Self*, other than the Father, other than the Son.

3. The personality of the Spirit is not evident directly from the *words* of the New Testament. One incidental reason lies in the genius of the Greek language. Πνεῦμα, being neuter, it is grammatically construed with a neuter pronoun. When, however, the Spirit is called the Paraclete,

¹ John iii. 5; Titus iii. 5, 6.

² John xvi. 14.

³ Rom. viii.; I Cor. xii.

⁴ I Cor. viii. 6.

⁵ Cf. § 88.

ὁ παράκλητος, as in John xvi. 7, and when afterwards the Paraclete is put in apposition with τὸ πνεῦμα, as is done in v. 13,¹ the masculine pronoun, ἐκεῖνος, is used. He shall glorify me, says our Lord; ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήμψεται καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.² When the grammatical construction allows it, the Spirit is denoted by the pronoun in the masculine gender.

With one exception, there are no passages in which the Holy Spirit is represented as speaking or acting by the use of the pronoun in the *first* person. In the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Holy Spirit is set forth as active after a personal manner.³ Self-consistent interpretation conducted according to the analogy of faith must deny that He is a divine attribute or an influence, or an impersonal divine agency. All the predicates of the Holy Spirit involve personality.

The exceptional passage is found in Acts xiii. 2: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said: 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them'" Here the Holy Spirit is represented as *speaking*, and as speaking in the first person: Separate me, Ἀφορίσατε δὴ μοι, Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them, ὃ προσκέκλημαι αὐτούς. The Spirit commands in the first person; and in the first person the Spirit refers to Himself, μοί.⁴ This

¹ Cf. John xiv. 26; xv. 26.

² John xvi. 14.

³ Acts xiii. 4; xv. 28; xvi. 7; Heb. iii. 7.

⁴ "Some inward call had come to Barnabas, and Saul himself; which is repeated by the mouth of others, that these also might be aware of the call and assent to it." Bengel *in loco*. Meyer says: "The Holy Spirit *said*, probably by one of the prophets, who announced to the Church the utterance of the Spirit revealed to him, Separate *to me*, μοί, for my service. δὴ with the imperative makes the summons more decided and urgent. ὃ προσκέκλημαι αὐτούς is a description of the design, *I have called them to me*, namely, to be my

peculiar passage when compared with the manifold teaching of the gospels, the Acts and epistles respecting the office and functions of the Spirit, requires us to recognize in the words, not an expression denoting an impersonal agency, but the speech and the authority of the divine *ego*, a personal One.

4. The divine personality of the Holy Spirit and His essential unity with the Father and the Son is the postulate of New Testament teaching on the *work* of the Holy Spirit; the postulate which at all points conditions the incarnation and the mediatorship. On the one hand, the mediatorship of Christ pre-supposes the co-equal agency of the Holy Spirit; on the other hand the same co-equal agency of the Spirit is anticipated by Christ's mediatorship. The Spirit conditions the possibility of the personal Mediator. He also conditions among men the mediatorial efficiency of the accomplished work. As Martensen expresses it: "The Spirit is the plastic, consummating, completing principle in the divine economy."¹

By the Holy Spirit the only begotten Son of God became man.² By the Spirit the child Jesus grew and increased in wisdom.³ By the Spirit He became personally qualified for His ministry, was invested with the Messianic office, and was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; ⁴ by the Spirit He cast out devils; ⁵ by the Spirit Jesus offered Himself a spotless sacrifice.⁶ Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead; even Jesus Christ our

organs, interpreters, instruments in the propagation of the Gospel."—Forcible testimonies, by implication, to the *personality* of the Holy Spirit on the plane of divine nature.

¹ Christian Dogmatics, p. 112. ² Luke i. 35. ³ Luke ii. 40, 52.

⁴ Matt. iii. 16; iv. i; Mark i. 12; Luke iv. i; Luke iv. 14, 18, 21.

⁵ Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20.

⁶ Heb. ix. 14.

Lord.¹ The advent of the Spirit, fulfilling the promise, constitutes the Church, the body of Christ, and imparts diversities of gifts.² The Spirit reveals to apostles the wisdom of God;³ the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; the preaching of Christ and Him crucified is in demonstration of the Spirit;⁴ the Spirit abides in believers;⁵ He sanctifies them;⁶ He makes them His temples;⁷ He bears witness with their spirits that they are the children of God;⁸ He helps their infirmities, and makes intercession for them;⁹ He quickens their mortal bodies in the resurrection from the dead;¹⁰ and glorifies them.¹¹

These references to the office and functions of the Holy Spirit might be multiplied. Studied under the guidance of the analogy of faith such teaching cannot be consistently interpreted, unless we proceed on the assumption that the Holy Spirit is divine, a personal divine agent, distinct from the Son and the Father, yet as to His essential nature identical. To recognize the wide difference between the office of the incarnate Son and the office of the mediating Spirit in the economy of revelation and redemption, in the organism of the Church, in the new birth and the salvation of believers; to admit that the Spirit searches the deep things,¹² *τὰ βάθη*, of God; that He glorifies Jesus Christ; that He takes of the things of Christ and declares them unto us; in a word, to recognize the revealed truth that His agency at all points both conditions and complements the mediatorship of Jesus

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² Acts ii; I Cor. xii.

³ I Cor. ii. 10.

⁴ I Cor. ii. 4.

⁵ John xiv. 16; Jude 20.

⁶ I Peter i. 2.

⁷ I Cor. vi. 19; II Cor. vi. 16.

⁸ Rom. viii. 16.

⁹ Rom. viii. 26.

¹⁰ Rom. viii. 11.

¹¹ II Cor. iii. 18. Cf. 2 Cor. 7.

¹² "The expression, *depths of God*, denotes *the whole richness and exhaustless fulness* which is hidden in God,—all, therefore, that goes to make up His being, His attributes, His thoughts, plans, decrees, etc." Meyer on I Cor. ii. 10.

Christ, and nevertheless deny of the Holy Spirit personal qualities and divine nature, is a contradiction.

5. The complete evidence from Scripture for the personality of the Spirit, for His co-equality and co-essentiality with the Father and the Son, is not obtained by collating New Testament passages which teach or imply His divine dignity. All teaching on this question is vitally inwoven with the totality of Christian revelation.

The Spirit comes to view in conjunction with the incarnate Son and His mediatorship; Father, Son, and Spirit being active and manifested on the same supernal plane of divine existence, active in the same history of the new creation, and the same redemptive work. All particular passages in which the divine co-equality of the Son is prominent, such as John i. 1-18; Phil. ii. 6, 7; Col. i. 15-20; John xvii. 1-6, and others; also particular books, such as the Gospel by John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse, and others whose aim it is to represent the supreme personal dignity of Jesus Christ, are at the same time, by necessary implication, a scriptural argument for the co-equality of the Holy Spirit. To say the least, this indirect argument is in principle just as forcible as the argument furnished by explicit particular statements. If there be any difference, the argument from necessary implication is more convincing. The relation of the Spirit to the personal history of the incarnate Son and to His mediatorship, from His nativity to His glorification, is so intimate and so manifold that faith in the divine personality of the Son shuts us up to faith in the co-equal dignity of the Spirit.

Otherwise the teaching of the New Testament would be contradictory. Should we assume that the Spirit is not personal but only a divine influence, the consequence

would follow that the divine-human personality of Christ is conditioned at every epoch and through all periods of His mediatorship by an impersonal agency ; such an interdependence between the personal and the impersonal in the kingdom of God would be contrary to the logic of revelation. No divine attribute, no exercise of divine power or wisdom is by the New Testament related to the constitution of our Lord's person or to the history of His mediatorial work as is the Holy Spirit. The truth is that His position and office are in contrast with divine attributes and the character of divine influences.

Or should we assume that the Spirit is personal, but a being belonging to the realm of creation, we shall have an infinite chasm between the incarnate Son and the objective conditions of His incarnation. The will of a finite creature would be the agent through whose activity and immanence in the sphere of time and eternity, the new creation would be begun, developed and perfected. Such an assumption would directly assail the consistency and the symmetry of the New Testament portrait.

We have, therefore, in effect a two-fold argument from the New Testament for the divine personality and divine co-equality of the Holy Spirit : the one from explicit affirmations concerning His personal dignity and mediating office ; the other from the pre-suppositions of all the teaching concerning the incarnate Son. Hence it comes that in the history of dogma a denial of the co-essentiality of the Holy Spirit, in other words, the denial that the Holy Spirit is a personal principle different from the Son and from the Father in the eternal organism of the Godhead, has always been accompanied or followed by a denial of the premundane existence of the Son in distinction from the Father.

§ 109.

New Testament teaching on the triunity of the Godhead may be studied under another aspect: not by inquiry into the doctrine of the Son in distinction from the Father, nor into the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in distinction from the Father and Son, but by contemplating the forms in which trinitarian unity comes to view. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit confront faith in their distinctions and in their unity in unique phraseologies and in unique transactions.

1. All particular utterances and passages cited and examined in a previous chapter here again claim some attention;¹ especially the baptismal formula given by our Lord in the apostolic commission, and the benediction of St. Paul.²

The Son and the Spirit are conjoined with the Father and are active in the same heavenly mystery, holy baptism. Definitely distinguished, the Son and the Spirit live and move with the Father in the divine sphere. Baptism quickens a transcendent relation with the Son as with the Father, with the Spirit as with the Son.

The apostolic benediction pre-supposes two things: 1. that the Spirit is distinct from Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ is distinct from the Father, and that each has a supernal office in the history of redemption distinct from the others; 2. that heavenly blessing, or divine good, proceeds from Three in One by the same act.³ Benediction

¹Chapter ix. On the Economic Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

²Matt. xxviii. 19; II Cor. xiii. 14. Cf. John xiv. 16, 17, 26; John xv. 26; John xvi. 13-15; I Cor. xii. 1-7; Eph. ii. 18.

³Says Meyer: "Full and solemn as in no other Epistle, *tripartite* in accordance with the divine Trinity, from which the three highest blessings of eternal salvation come to believers."

proceeds from the one God; but that benediction is three-fold; the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the *νοῦς* of the Holy Spirit.

2. Applying this method of reasoning to triune *transactions*, there is like evidential force in the miraculous conception, the baptism of Jesus by John, and the transfiguration.

The records by Matthew and Luke of the conception by the Virgin recognize trinal divine activity.¹ The angel said to Mary: 'the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God.' The mystery of the conception declares the union of three principles: the Most High, the Holy Ghost, and the Son of God. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Most High, overshadows the Virgin, and a Holy One, the Son of God, is to be born. The subject of the conception is 'the Son of God'; the mediating agent through whom the Virgin conceives is 'the Holy Ghost'; and the original Principle from whom the Holy Ghost proceeds is 'the Most High.' *Three* divine factors, each performing a distinct office, are one in this central miracle.

The baptism of Jesus presents the same three-fold conjunction:² Jesus, God, and the Spirit of God. Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon Him, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." The baptism of Jesus is the counterpart to His conception. *Jesus* was baptized; the heaven is rent asunder and the *Holy Ghost* descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon Him; and a

¹ Matt. i. 18, 20; Luke i. 35.

² Matt. iii. 13-17; Mark i. 9-11; Luke iii. 21, 22.

Voice came out of heaven: "Thou art my beloved Son." Each is a distinct subject, and the office of each is peculiar to Himself. Three personal subjects, and three offices: namely, the beloved *Son*, fulfilling all righteousness; the *Holy Ghost*, imparting Himself to the Son; and the *Father*, recognizing Jesus to be His Son and investing Him with authority to speak in His name, meet in the unity of the baptismal transaction. By this three-fold mystery Jesus is distinguished from all the people, distinguished from **John the Baptist**, and from all the prophets. It constitutes the epoch in which He passes from private into public life, consecrated to the work of founding the Kingdom of God. Of this triune epoch, this unity of three differentiated principles, the only adequate logical pre-supposition is the transcendent pre-existing essential unity of Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

Answerable to the triune mystery of His birth and of His baptism is His transfiguration¹ in presence of Peter, John and James, when Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and talked with Jesus of His decease. The central figure is Jesus. The two men from the spiritual world and the three men from earth move on a subordinate plane; their interest and devotion being absorbed in their common Master. At His baptism the heaven was opened and in bodily form like a dove the Holy Ghost lighted upon Him. On the Mount of Transfiguration a bright cloud overshadowed the assembly. The cloud symbolizes the medium between the divine realm and the domain of creation; corresponding to the descent from the open heaven of the Holy Ghost symbolized by the dove. As then a voice spake from

¹ Matt. xvii. 2; Mark ix. 2; Luke ix. 29. The verb *μετεμορφώθη* used by Matthew and Mark implies, as Bengel remarks, that this glory had always existed within Jesus.

heaven, so now from the midst of the cloud comes the Voice, saying, **This is my beloved Son**, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.

Three extraordinary factors enter into the significance of the vision: Jesus, His face shining as the sun; the bright Cloud,¹ overshadowing Jesus and His disciples; and the Voice out of the cloud, declaring Jesus to be His beloved Son. Jesus on earth is the Son of the Father in heaven who, Himself unseen, witnesses in words from the cloud of glory to the divine mission and the divine work of the Son: a unique event in which spiritual perception discerns the manifestation of ontologic triunity.

The transfiguration, the baptism and conception of Jesus do not *in words* teach anything respecting the objective constitution of God; but for this reason these triune events are more forcible than any conceptual teaching. They are historical transactions in which Three in One are revealed in the concrete. If we accept the reality of these mysteries we must recognize triune divine manifestations. A fact has deeper, richer, more permanent significance than a word.

3. The force of the argument in reasoning from divine manifestations to eternal divine existence, from trinal distinctions in historical facts to personal differences in the unity of God's eternal being, turns on the idea of revelation.

Divine revelation means that God is that which He manifests Himself to be. If in Himself He were not the same as, or were other than, His self-manifestation, then revelation would not be truth, but a falsification. Christian revelation would not give us certain knowledge. Un-

¹ "Not a dark cloud, like that which rested on Sinai." Otto v. Gerlach.

certainty and ignorance regarding the constitution of the Godhead would be the doom of the Christian as of the pagan. This negative hypothesis is not the suggestion of Scripture, much less does it find support from any Scripture declarations or implications. The implications as of the Old Testament, so of the New Testament, bear the contrary impress. *Truth* came by Jesus Christ.¹ No one knoweth the Son save the Father ; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.² Says Jesus : " We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen."³ Of like import are all other references to the nature of revelation. The essential being of God is in kind no other than the declaration of His being by the Word made flesh in His words and His deeds.

Sound theological thought must follow the order of the concrete Messianic process, passing from the Infinite to the finite, from the Eternal to the temporal. The ground and the goal of Christian revelation is God Himself, His nature and character, His purpose and glory. It is the will of infinite Love that God be loved by man, and by man be *known*,⁴ known now in proportion to his limited spiritual capacity, and known more perfectly hereafter as his spiritual capacity grows toward perfection. Therefore God, the absolute Truth, goes forth in the person of His Son toward man formed in His image, to the end that the darkness of sin, its falsehoods and miseries, may be superseded by the pure light of His self-manifestation in the communion of the Spirit.⁵

¹ John i. 17.

² Matt. xi. 27.

³ John iii. 11. Paul says: " The things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God." I Cor. ii. 11.

⁴ John xvii. 3.

⁵ " It is a frivolous objection against the incomprehensibility of God,

The differentiation of Father, and Son, and Spirit in the economy of redemption is not an accommodation to the finitude of man, not a form or method of God's approach to which there is no truth answering in the eternal being of the Godhead ; but the differentiation appears in the revelation, because this differentiation, trinity in unity, is objective and eternal. The unity of the Godhead is the absolute spiritual organism in which Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit subsist ; *therefore*, in the absolute revelation by the person of the incarnate Son this threefoldness is manifested. The ontological relations of the Godhead come to view in the trinal economy. Considered from this point of view, all the representations under the threefold character of Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit given in the New Testament, whether by words, or by miraculous transactions of which Jesus is the central subject, become a scriptural argument for ontologic triunity.

namely, that revelation has revealed nothing, or has not revealed at all, if it have left what is mysterious, inexpressible, or unfathomable, unexplained. On the contrary, we begin only now to live and move in mystery, because there is a revelation, just as we only then become enlightened when we are conscious of our ignorance ! In the biblical idea of revelation there is nothing to justify an eunomian position. Revelation conducts to a new region of knowledge and experience of God, which, as regards the actual state of mankind, is the highest and most complete ; but so far is it from removing the general limitations to human knowledge, that it rather effects a blessed consciousness of their future removal, and produces a not less blessed consciousness of the incomprehensible fulness of the being and becoming in which we already stand in our life and nature." *System of Christian Doctrine*, by Nietzsche, p. 138.

III. ANALOGIES.

§ 110.

The self-verifying force of triune truth and the argument from New Testament teaching are supported by many analogies ; especially by the analogy of the constitution of man.

I. Trinitarian analogies are numerous and various. They address us from every kingdom of nature. All kingdoms foreshadow and anticipate man, the outcome and end of the creative process advancing from lower to higher, from less perfect to more perfect structure and organization; and man, the acme of the creative process, is formed in God's image. Conceding man's divine imageship, it is rational to presume that, if the personal Creator be triune, traces of the constitution of the personal Creator may be found in the organization of the personal creature. Reason expects that the thing formed will bear marks of the genius of the Former.¹ And if the world-forming process through all its epochs looks toward man as the ultimate product, it is rational to presume that the lower kingdoms may reveal rudimentary anticipations of its final outcome, a presump-

¹ Says Richard Chevenix Trench: it is not merely that "analogies assist to make the truth intelligible, or, if intelligible before, present it more vividly to the mind, which is all that some will allow them. Their power lies deeper than this, in the harmony unconsciously felt by all men, and by deeper minds continually recognized and plainly perceived, between the natural and spiritual worlds, so that analogies from the first are felt to be something more than illustrations, happily but yet arbitrarily chosen. They are arguments, and may be alleged as witnesses; the world of nature being throughout a witness for the world of spirit, proceeding from the same hand, growing out of the same root, and being constituted for that very end. All lovers of truth readily acknowledge these mysterious harmonies and the force of argu-

tion that the philosophy of natural science dominant in our times is asserting. It would be instructive to study the impersonal works of the Creator as a typification of the Creator's being ; but I propose to confine this branch of study to a brief survey of the human kingdom.

Analogy is a valid method of thought and of progress in true knowledge; a method that is instinctively pursued in natural spheres of human thought as well as by the writers of holy Scripture. Rational thought spontaneously assumes an analogy between the physical and the metaphysical, between the natural and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine. Of all metaphysical words the elementary meaning is physical; of technical scientific terms the elementary meaning is empirical. So in the sphere of religion. Words applied to deity, and words denoting elements of worship, have originally a human or earthly import. Words of human significance are intrinsically fit to be and to become the bearers of divine significance, because man is akin to God.

On this general principle rests the validity of New Testament language. All Greek words used by the evangelists and apostles to express Christian truth are of pagan origin, and as such embody thoughts which are non-Christian, some even anti-Christian. So closely and per-

ments derived from them. To them the things on earth are copies of the things in heaven. They know that the earthly tabernacle is made after the pattern of things seen in the mount (Exod. xxv. 40; I Chron. xxviii. 11, 12); and the question suggested by the Angel in Milton is often forced upon their meditations,—

‘What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?’”

—Notes on the Parables, by Trench, p. 19.

manently inwoven is the pagan meaning with the Christian meaning that the latter cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of the former. Why was pagan Greek the fit organ for the expression of Christian truth? Because the genius of Greek national life is analogous to the genius of Christianity; or, to go back a step further, because the psychological constitution of man images the ontology of God.

Especially do the manifold figures of speech employed in the Old and New Testament, above all the parables of our Lord, pre-suppose the correspondence of normal human life to divine life. Those who deny the validity of analogical reasoning in relation to the being of God, if logically consistent, will have to deny the wisdom of Christ in seeking to teach divine truth by means of parables.¹

2. The unit of human society is, not an individual, not a man in distinction from woman, but the family; and the institution of the family is founded on marriage. Normal marriage is monogamy: the mystical union of one man and one woman for life. 'Twain become one flesh. Two persons of opposite sex become a unity, the unity being represented by the child. The father, the mother and the children are three distinct factors entering into the estate of the family. The unity from which is developed the entire social structure is a threefold unity.²

¹ Otto v. Gerlach clearly implies the analogy between the spiritual and the natural in his definition of the parable. He says: "A parable is the presentation of a doctrine, or of an event belonging to the spiritual order of the world, under the garb of a transaction of actual, natural life. Accordingly there is no feature in any parable of our Lord that in reality is impossible, provided the narrative be properly understood. Only this is to be noted, that here and there, after the manner of the Old Testament, He, toward the close of a parable, passes from the image to the subject-matter." O. v. Gerlach's *New Testament*, I. p. 90.

² Dorner recognizes the propriety and force of this analogy: "Even

3. A similar trinality is to be seen in the individual. Man's constitution is not a single thing, but tripartite. Three distinct principles, body, soul and spirit centre in personality, the *ego*. Each is essential to the idea of manhood. Neither principle subsists disjoined from the others. The individual man normally developed lives a triune life. He lives in somatic, in psychic and in pneumatic modes and relations, and in all at the same instant of time. No individual would be a man were either principle or either class of human activities absolutely wanting. The three constitute the one person; or I may say, the individual is a concrete unit by virtue of his threefold existence. Further, psychological phenomena reveal the mysterious truth that each principle may be active in relative independence of the others.

4. Each principle may also be studied in relation to itself. If we contemplate the soul, we discover united three distinct functions. Psychology distinguishes will, reason or understanding and feeling. Each may be denoted by different terms; but we do not avoid the fundamental trinal division. We may speak of self-determination, or choice, or spontaneity of will; of intellect, of thought or reflection; and of affection or emotion. Or we may speak of freedom, consciousness and sensibility. Different words express different phases of psychological life; but they are reducible to three primary forms. The soul is a trinal unity.

5. This process may be carried still further. Each of these functions is trinal. Three things enter into the nature of *freedom*. 1. Law, the authority of law, or moral

in human communities two become united by means of a third, in whom they meet with and recognize themselves. Thus the child as a third to father and mother is a point of juncture or a bond for their mutual love. . . . To which Schöberlein rightly draws attention.' System of Christian Doctrine, Clark's ed. I. p. 426.

truth; or, as Kant called the mandatory element of freedom, the *categorical imperative*. 2. Self-determination or choice. Personal freedom recognizes and affirms the authority of law. Thereby objective authority becomes by the free act of personality an immanent force in ethical life. 3. The union of the ethical object with the ethical subject, or the conjunction and harmony of two otherwise contrary principles. The law fills the will inasmuch as the will of its own motion embraces the law. Says our Lord: If the truth¹ shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Truth effectuates freedom, but only in the personality that by its own self-determination appropriates the truth, thus making the truth a living possession. If either principle be wanting, genuine freedom does not exist.

Objective knowledge is likewise trinal. 1. The object, the knowable thing, whether addressing the human mind from without or from within. 2. The knowing subject, a subject capable of perceiving, conceiving and reproducing the object in the sphere of consciousness. 3. The union of the knowable object and the knowing subject. By the process of intellection the object obtains idealized existence. Knowledge is thorough and complete in the degree that the ideal existence in the sphere of mind answers to the object existing in the sphere of reality.

Trinality meets us in the unity of self-consciousness. *I* am the knowable object; *I* also am the knowing subject. Self-consciousness is the indissoluble oneness of both. The triune action may be expressed thus: I know myself; I am known; I know myself as knowing and as being known. Neither factor may be eliminated. The unity of three different forms of personal activity conditions self-

¹ John viii. 32, 36.

consciousness. The analogy may also be presented in the following manner: I think; the product of my thinking is my thought or word; the thought and the thinking, though always distinct, are one.

6. From personality we pass into the science of logic; here the triune law is dominant in all departments.

The *concept* includes *three* distinctions: contents, extension, and their reciprocal connection. Hence logic speaks of the quality, the quantity and the relation of quantity to quality of a concept. Every concept is either general, or particular, or singular. Though neither is fixed, yet no conceptual cycle may consist of more or less than these three degrees.

The *syllogism* has *three* propositions, and *three* terms. If not all expressed, all are implied. No process of deduction tolerates either more or less. In the complete form of the syllogism the middle, the minor and major terms occur each twice.

The trinality of thought is embodied in the trinality of speech. In the classic language of Greece the law of three in one reigns, with but few exceptions, in all etymological forms. The noun has three genders, three primary cases, and three numbers. The verb has three primary tenses; three primary moods; three voices; three numbers; and excepting the dual has three inflections for each number. The adjective, as in the languages of all civilized nations, has three degrees of comparison. A quality may be thought as positively existing; or it may be greater or less in one thing than in another; or, when compared with the same note in many things, the quality may be the greatest or the least. Thought may intensify either degree of comparison; but speech has only three cardinal forms of logical judgment.

This enumeration of illustrations of triunities found in language might be extended at great length. Greek reveals the law of 'Three in One' in nearly all its unities.

§ 111.

Analogies possess no original nor affirmative force. They have neither produced the Christian doctrine concerning the triune God, nor do they account for its prevalence in the consciousness of the Church. Nor are analogies, derived from the kingdom of man, cited to explain the mystery of the Godhead. For some persons they may bring this fundamental truth nearer to the apprehension of the reason. Even this possible result is not a part of my design. The validity of belief in God's triunity rests on objective grounds, as developed in previous enquiries.

Analogies serve a different purpose. They demonstrate that trīnal unity, or 'three in one,' is the rational type of existence, and of thought, and of speech. Triunity is not something foreign to human life and to reason, but native to both.

Should we reason from anthropology to the nature of God, it would be legitimate to presume, not that God is a single Thing, but a unity, a *One* in which three principles are three distinct modes of His existence. Evidence of the rationality of such presumption we have in grotesque triads common to leading systems of pagan mythology and philosophy; for example, the religions of India and of Egypt. Like language, mythology declares that the triad is indigenous to the soil of the human spirit, not an exotic.

If we accept the following truths of revelation:

1. that God is Three in One ; 2. that the universe is the creation of the triune God ; and, 3. that man, the exponent of nature, is formed after God's image ; then the trinal phenomena, so abundant and diversified in the complex organism of the human kingdom, appear to be legitimate consequences. If triunities were wanting in sub-human kingdoms, especially if wanting in the human world, the Christian thinker would be struck by the contrast ; and the anti-trinitarian might reason from the utter absence of trinal unities in creation to the presumption that there is no trinal unity in the constitution of the Creator. Reasoning on the basis of the general principle, that an author stamps the impress of himself on his production, we may go further, and say that phenomena furnish what may be called a negative attestation to the fundamental truth of the Christian faith, that the one God, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit is Three in One.

The neo-platonic notion that God is pure and simple being, $\tauὸ ὄν$, or that He is a single principle without community of self-conscious existence, cannot authenticate itself as absolute truth to the universal reason of mankind. Men think and speak and act spontaneously on the assumption that the trinal cycle is a law of existence and a law of rational activity. Thus considered, the world without and the world within both pre-suppose the truth of the Christian doctrine of God.

CHAPTER XI.

PROPERTIES OF THE TRIUNE GOD.

§ 112.

Of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, theology predicates positive qualities, commonly named attributes. Qualities are impersonal distinctions in divine being. Impersonal distinctions are of two classes. For want of a better form of expression I shall call the one class *fundamental* properties and the other *derivative* properties.

1. To denote the contents of the divine idea the term *property* or *quality* is preferable to *attribute*. Attribute is subjective, and may support the opinion of Philo, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Schleiermacher and many other theologians, that impersonal distinctions predicable of the triune God possess no objective truth, but are merely modes of apprehension in which man, because of his finitude, conceives and thinks of God.¹ The word *property* as

¹ Philo says: "God is without any qualities, and we can only ascribe to Him pure being without any attributes." Yet this statement implies, as Dr. Henry B. Smith remarks, "some degree of knowledge—that He is, if not *what* He is."

From Philo, Augustine and other ancient princes of thought, theological science has inherited an agnostic type that has neutralized the force of divine truth by involving theology in logical contradictions.

Even Archbishop Leighton, (1611-1684,) in his lecture on The Divine Attributes, says: "Perhaps the properest answer we could give to the question, what is God? would be to observe a profound silence: or, if we should think proper to answer anything, it ought to be something next to this absolute silence; namely, God is; which gives us a

to its import is objective, and withholds support from false subjective tendencies. The property of an object is its peculiar quality, that which is inherent in and essential to its nature. In this sense we apply the word to the distinctions predicable of God's triune being.

2. As regards the properties of divine being, there are two errors which endanger sound theology. The one has just been noted. It resolves God's holiness and justice, His omnipotence and omniscience, and all other ethical and metaphysical qualities, into subjective modes of human apprehension. In God Himself, it is held, there are no such distinctions; He is pure, infinite, absolute essence.

This opinion contradicts the Christological idea of revelation that in Jesus, the Christ, we have the Self-manifestation of the Godhead, both of His nature and His will. Undoubtedly it is true that we know God conformably to the conditions of human knowledge, and we think of God conformably to the categories and laws of human thought; but Christian thought does not from itself originate that which Christian thought predicates of God; the contents of our affirmations, if developed from the consciousness of faith in Christ, cannot be merely the product of our affirmative powers. Instead, unless misled by fancy or bad logic, our affirmations answer to divine realities. The contents of the true idea, if rationally developed from faith-consciousness, are given by the divine nature as this is in itself, confronting Christian faith in the person of His Son. Between the nature of man and the nature of God there is positive affinity; God is the archetype of man, man the

higher and better idea of Him, than anything we can either express or conceive." Works, p. 608. Yet it is the effort and aim of Leighton in his Lectures, Commentary on First Peter, and Sermons, not simply to assert God's existence, but to teach truth respecting His nature, attributes, and works.

image of God. The normal conditions of human knowledge and the necessary modes of human thought answer to the objective reality and the modes of divine existence.

Therefore we reverse negative reasoning, and say : inasmuch as the triune God is in Himself good, righteous, merciful, powerful and wise, man is so constituted that he is moved from within, and his rational faculties are fitted, to think of God's being under these modes of apprehension.

3. The other error is the paganizing notion of the Gnostics, who resolved divine attributes into emanations from God, regarded as the unfathomable abyss. Instead of divine qualities, attributes are held to be entitative powers, or secondary deities, possessing relative independence of the divine will.¹

This phase of gnosticism, theology has transcended. The *pleroma* of God is not an emanation of superhuman *eons*, but the infinitude of His own being. Attributes are not objects other than the distinctions in Himself. They are eternal qualities of His triune life and character, which become manifest in the manifold relations which the personal Creator bears to personal creatures.

4. Positive divine qualities are distinguishable into two classes. It is difficult to express the difference by appropriate terms. I propose to use the words *fundamental* and *derivative*. This terminology is not wholly satisfactory.

¹ "God enters upon a process of development, and sends forth from His bosom the several *eons*; that is, the attributes and unfolded powers of His nature, the ideas of the eternal spirit-world, such as mind, reason, wisdom, power, truth, life. . . The whole body of *eons* forms the ideal world, or light-world, or spiritual fulness, the *Pleroma*, as opposed to the *Kenoma*, or the material world of emptiness. The one is the totality of the divine powers and attributes, the other the region of shadow and darkness." Schaff's Church History, vol. II. p. 453.

But it may be taken as the best that is available. There is an objective difference, between God as *life* and as omnipotent, between God as *light* and omniscient, between God as *love* and merciful or just. This difference it is important as well as convenient to express by some appropriate general terms.

5. By the term *fundamental properties* I denote the deepest and broadest revealed qualities of the being of the Godhead, namely, Life, Light, Love. They are different modes of the existence and activity of tri-personal unity. Either predicate necessarily pre-supposes and embraces the others; but the unfathomable fulness of divine unity can be apprehended only by beholding each and all.

6. By the term *derivative properties* I denote the more definite and outward modes of divine existence and divine activity, namely, goodness, holiness, righteousness, justice, mercy, immutability, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience. The enumeration of derivative properties may be extended as we take a view more and more definite and circumscribed of the modes of divine activity.

7. The fundamental properties are the deeper distinctions, inasmuch as they underlie and impart quality to all other properties or characteristics of divine being. The former are more potential, the latter more actual. If from God's love we distinguish His justice and mercy, we may say that mercy and justice are more actual than love. Not that love is less objective or less essential than mercy; but that the one, relatively to us, realizes itself in the other. We receive and we experience love under the form of mercy and justice. Derivative properties pre-suppose the 'fundamental' and stand in them; whilst 'fundamental' properties, are active *ad extra* and are realized by us in 'derivative

properties.' Of either class of properties we acquire sound knowledge only in so far as we study them, on the one hand, in their vital connection and reciprocal interdependence, and, on the other, as the objective fulness of God's triune being.

CHAPTER XII.

FUNDAMENTAL PROPERTIES.

§ 113.

The most general predicate to be affirmed of divine triune being is *Spirit*: God is Spirit.¹ Of Spirit we affirm Life, Light, Love, or the physical, the cognitive or logical, and the ethical.

The particular relation of these three distinct qualities to the most general idea we may express by the following affirmative propositions: Spirit is Life; Spirit is Light; Spirit is Love. This order of statement is not absolute. We may reverse the order, and say: Spirit is Love; Spirit is Light; Spirit is Life.

A Christological doctrine of triune divine *pleroma*,² will include these three primary moments: affirming Spirit to be the broadest and most fundamental idea, the doctrine will include Life, Light, Love as the primordial objective distinctions of triune Spirit.

¹ John iv. 24.

² John i. 16; Eph. iii. 19.

I. GOD AS SPIRIT.

[114.

God is the absolute Spirit. Spirit denotes His triune being as it is in its eternal realness. Spirit also contradistinguishes triune being from man, who unites in himself the spiritual with the corporeal, and from the entire sub-human creation. God as Spirit embraces three phases of original truth. Spirit is *of* Himself, *in* Himself, and *for* Himself.

1. God is *of* Himself; He is His own ground of existence, *causa sui*.¹ Triune aseity is to be distinguished from processes in realms of creation.

Of Himself God is by no latent involuntary necessity. Given the embryo with its apposite environment, and the individual becomes, without conscious will acting from within or acting upon it from without. Aseity excludes this relation between potential and actual, involved in the conception of an embryonic process. In God there are no blind plastic forces.

Nor may we assume an 'eternal nature of things' active unconsciously and unfreely, of which God's triune existence is the product. If the 'eternal nature of things' be conceived to be identical with divine nature, God's existence is on this assumption resolved into physical necessity; if 'eternal nature of things' be other than divine nature His existence is a mechanical product. Un-

¹ We have no word of Anglo-Saxon origin to express the truth contained in the Latin term *aseitas*, formed from the preposition *a* and the personal pronoun *se*, *of himself*; unless, using the freedom of the Latin, we also in English should unite the preposition and the pronoun in one word, and say *of-himself-ness*, a word that would scarcely commend itself to English taste.

der either supposition the Christological idea of God vanishes.

The triune God exists of Himself by the eternal activity of His self-conscious will. The distinction between divine will and divine essence is necessary and valid. But divine essence is not involuntary, and divine will is not unnecessitated. The whole nature of God is self-conscious and self-determined ; and His self-conscious will embraces the wholeness of His nature, the "deep things" of God. What He is He wills Himself to be ; and what He wills Himself to be He is. The necessity of His existence is free necessity ; and His freedom is necessary freedom. God as objective constitution is absolutely self-embraced ; God as subject in willing and knowing is absolutely self-embracing. In His triune relation to Himself, neither condition of unity can be wanting. Self-embraced, self-possessed God is, inasmuch as He is self-embracing ; self-embracing God is, inasmuch as He is self-embraced object. If we should suppose that as object God did not absolutely will His triune existence, or that as subject He did not embrace and possess the infinitude of divine nature, the supposition would be equivalent to the denial of aseity. On the one supposition we should have merely a fatalistic nature ; on the other no more than finite will.

To express this idea in other words : absolute Spirit is the unity of self-grounded being and self-determination ; He is self-producing and self-produced.¹ An existence other than He is God cannot be, inasmuch as His eternal will unchangeably embraces and affirms His self-grounded being ; and His self-determination is immutable, inasmuch as His self-grounded being is the immutable law of His freedom.

¹ Cf. Dorner's System of Christian Doctrine, § 31 b. I.

Hence we must deny two things: 1. that the divine will can affirm a volition that contravenes God's triune constitution; 2. that in the depths of His triune constitution there are latent possibilities that elude divine consciousness, or are wanting in absolute harmony with the divine will. His will and His nature are distinct, yet inseparably *one*.¹

2. God is *in* Himself. He has no conditions of existence, or of autonomy, or knowledge. If under this category we think of God, theology must affirm that 'the conditions' of divine nature and divine personality lie exclusively within the sphere of His self-existence.

Of Himself *a se*, not *ab alio*, God eternally has the *resources* of existence in His triune selfhood; living in communion with Himself, He is His own object, the wholeness of His existence is self-objective. Knowledge and will cover each other. He knows what He wills; relatively to Himself He wills what He knows.² In affirming the wholeness of His nature His will is the all-knowing will. In maintaining the absolute consciousness of the fulness of His being His knowledge is self-determined knowledge. In the relation of the triune God to His own being,

¹ "Die unendliche Kette von Wirkung u. Ursache, Ursache u. Wirkung läuft durch die Aseitität in sich selbst zurück; der progressus in infinitum kommt in dem absoluten zum Stillstand, das sich selbst in das Verhältniss von Ursache u. Wirkung setzt, u. also diese objective Bestimmtheiten in sich selbst setzt." Dörner's Dogmatics, I. p. 243.

² It does not follow that God wills whatever He knows relatively to the conduct of personal creatures. Men and angels, being *personal*, are capable of the right and capable of the wrong. They may choose to do what God's will forbids and condemns. God knows the wrong volition and the wrong deed; the deed and the volition are wrong because by His *will* forbidden. He knows the thing that He has not done, nor willed to be done. Theologies of past ages failed adequately to distinguish between God's self-relations and His relations to the world.

whilst we distinguish between the divine reason and divine will, we must affirm knowledge and freedom to be reciprocally commensurate. Self-knowledge is commensurate with self-affirmation; and self-affirmation determines the wholeness of self-knowledge. There is no unconscious action of divine will; and no involuntary status of self-knowledge or self-perception.

This truth may also be expressed thus: the wholeness of God's triune existence as object is transparent to God as tri-personal subject. God sees Himself absolutely. The triune Personality as seeing Himself, and the triune Being as seen, are identical. The infinite fulness of His three-fold existence He freely holds in His self-consciousness. Hence sound theology denies that there are possibilities of His infinite nature latent as to divine personality, or hidden from His self-knowledge; or that God's self-knowledge depends on conditions or relations beyond the realm of His own existence.

Herein divine knowledge and human knowledge differ as really as divine existence and human existence. Man has the ground of his existence in God; the fundamental conditions of his development and perfection, of his ethical and rational life, are other than himself. Hence man's self-consciousness depends on the relation he sustains constitutionally to His Creator, and to external nature. But since God has the ground of triune personality in His triune being, there are no conditions of absolute self-consciousness or absolute autonomy other than the reciprocal relations between Father and Son in the communion of the Holy Ghost.

3. God is *for* Himself, He is His own *end*, the only end of His triune existence and His triune activity. Aseity being the exclusive possession of the triune God, He is

self-sufficient and self-satisfying : self-sufficient, since all the resources of His nature and activity, of His ideas and His purposes, are in Himself; self-satisfying, since His own infinite fulness is adequate to the demands of His self-existent being. In His self-sufficiency and self-satisfaction He is unchangeably the same. God has no needs and no wants; hence He can have no source, nor condition, of happiness. All contingencies must be denied.

As His self-grounded being is absolutely adequate to divine reason and divine will, God is blessed; His blessedness is of Himself, in Himself. He is blessed in that He is the absolute Good; perfectly self-objective, His self-determined activity is unchangeably directed toward His own absolute truth as the only object adequate to, and worthy of divine personality. God inclines to Himself with infinite intensity; He reposes in Himself as His own all-sufficient fulness. Therefore theology must deny that the end of His existence or activity is the world, either unconscious nature or the personality of man. The contrary proposition expresses the truth. Neither the cosmos nor man is self-sufficient or self-satisfying. Man is not his own end; self-consciousness and conscience being witnesses. Much less may either nature or human personality be for God ultimate. God is the end of man; and for the reason that God exists of Himself and in Himself. If God were not self-grounded, if not the self-satisfying end of His own existence, He would not be the final end of man.

§ 115.

Absolute Spirit embracing three essential phases of original Truth is trinal being. Uniting essential, reciprocal relations in the idea of self-grounded existence, Spirit is absolutely free.

1. Trinality enters into the constitution of absolute Spirit. Of Himself, Spirit is His own adequate *ground*, *causa essendi*. For Himself, Spirit is His own satisfying *end*, *causa finalis*. In Himself, Spirit is eternally *self-related*; unchangeable self-relatedness is the sufficient life-communion of Himself with Himself. Absolute Spirit realizes the three essential categories of reason—ground, end, interaction.

Reflecting upon each category by itself, the same idea of trinality of existence is manifest.

Self-grounded existence involves three moments. In the absoluteness of Spirit we distinguish between *self-producing* activity and *self-produced* existence; but Spirit self-produced does not stand asunder from Spirit self-producing. In affirming Himself God is affirmed; in being affirmed God affirms Himself. Aseity is absolute in this necessary reciprocal *communion*.

Self-relatedness is trinal, viewed ethically or logically. Self-affirmation and self-consciousness involve the difference between subject and object. As self-affirming and self-knowing Spirit is *subject*; as self-affirmed and self-known Spirit is *object*. The object affirmed and known, and the subject affirming and knowing, become absolutely unconditioned consciousness in a third relation. The object acted upon and known, and the subject active and knowing are the same being in the *unity* of personality.

Spirit as the end of His self-existence is trinal. Distinctions and unity are involved in the teleological category. God is active for an absolute end. The end is His triune personality. Tri-personal existence as His own end is self-sufficient and self-satisfying. Or I may say : God is *self-communicating* ; God is *self-communicated* ; divine blessedness consists in this that as self-communicated God is absolutely adequate to the demand and the possibilities of His nature as self-communicating. His life of original goodness includes this absolute *intercommunication* of self as *causa finalis* and self as *causa essendi*.

2. Being of Himself, in Himself and for Himself, Spirit is absolutely free ; free *ad intra*, in His immediate relation to His triune essence ; free *ad extra*, in His relation to all possible existences beyond Himself.

As God alone has aseity, He is the ground and the condition of all kinds of otherness, whether it be spirit or matter. Self-grounded, self-knowing, and self-loving, God the absolute Spirit renders the idea and fact of a finite creation possible ; that idea being referable to the freedom of absolute goodness and love. Says Zwingli : "Deus . . . distrahi amat, possideri gaudet."

If God were not *causa sui*, He would be limited and circumscribed by absolute power other than Himself ; and the creation of the universe could not be the unconditional activity of triune love. But existing by the eternal activity of His will, self-objective and self-sufficient, He is infinite triune fulness, by virtue of which He is the voluntary Author of the universe. God does not shut out and contradict creaturely existence ; but because absolutely independent and free He is the ethical possibility of a world in time and space. He chooses to comprehend the creature within the free activity of His love *ad extra*, fill-

ing the universe with the powers, and functions, and teleological relations of His own idea.¹ God goes forth from Himself in the person of His Son, through the Spirit. He is all in all, and through all as well as above all.²

Inasmuch as Spirit is His own end, *causa finalis*, the cosmos carries in itself a teleology, a teleology derived from its Author ; the unconscious kingdoms of nature are evolving under a teleological law, which pre-supposes self-conscious personality. The process going forward in the domain of creation stands in the continuous activity of the Creator. Developing by virtue of laws with which it is endowed, the material universe is looking toward an end determined by the freedom of Spirit ; yet that pre-determined end is none other than the goal of the divinely sustained movement active in creation itself. That end is the glorification of the creature, including man and the cosmos.

II. GOD THE SPIRIT AS LIFE.

§ 116.

Of the triune God we affirm not only that He exists, but also that He *lives*. God is not a rigid entity, not the simplicity of an *ens*, but a spiritual organ-

¹ "Spirit expresses something positive," says Dorner, "a peculiar being transcending nature and its categories, which is not merely of higher worth than all finite good things, but which is also the absolute final end. In God as Spirit are found the principles of all those ideas of which the world is the finite manifestation, the principles of Design and Order, Beauty and Harmony. Spirit is the original seat of the 'eternal truths'; in Him they have their absolute being. . . How can absolute being, which is to be thought as the original possibility both of existing things and of knowledge, be such a possibility if it is not essentially *spiritual*?" System of Doctrine, § 23, 4.

² Eph. iv. 6.

ism. The organized life predicable of God as Spirit excludes two errors: creatural development, and mechanical fixedness.

1. God is the absolute tri-personal organism; as self-grounded and absolute, the organic unity of His existence excludes all limitations of creatureship. God eternally is, and eternally is becoming; but He does not pass from the unconscious to the conscious, nor from indeterminate nature to self-determined freedom. The process from embryo to self-conscious personality predicable of man, must of God be denied; yet as man is God's noblest image, the human organism furnishes the closest analogy for theological thought, especially the perfection of human life addressing the eye of faith from the personal history of Jesus. Nor can thought affirm the possibility of *ethical* change or a progress of God from good to better, such as is ascribed to the personal history of men or of angels. The idea of triune absolute Spirit, as presented in preceding articles forbids these and similar conceptions.

2. But thought may not fall into the contrary error, an error to which theology has often been exposed. God is not fixed, inflexible existence. Self-grounded, self-objective, and self-sufficient, the identity of His triune being is not inert, motionless identity. Divine being is living being; divine existence is living existence. "The Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself";¹ His essential unity, including personal distinctions, implies constant action proceeding exclusively yet freely from within, and reciprocal interaction. The nearest analogy is not an arbitrary sovereign, not the process of vegetable growth, much less a mechanism, but the

¹ John v. 26.

ethico-organic as this is realized in the vital unity of man's personality. Divine identity involves free activity, or autonomic movement, complete within the constitution of triune existence; and free activity implies eternal *change*; not change from the possible to the real, from good to better, from the less perfect to the more perfect, nor any transition from one mode to another mode of existence, such as the individual man or the human race may actualize **in the progress** of its history; but divine identity implies that vital interchange of the personal with the personal which the idea of immutable communion of Father and Son by the Spirit in the unity and sameness of self-grounded essence necessarily pre-supposes.

In other words: triune being is unchangeable vital activity ever proceeding from the depths of divine nature and ever returning into itself; but vital activity is spiritual, or self-conscious and self-determined. "Spirit," says Dorner, "is essentially consciousness and will, and both in unity." If we exclude from our terms all material attributes, material conditions and finite relations, we may say that God, the absolute spiritual organism, includes a principle, a process and distinct members. Each member has distinct functions *ad intra*; the process is positive tri-personal inter-communion; principle denotes the unity of life of absolute Spirit, of life wholly present and active in each member. As triune original life, God affirms in His constitution order, proportion, harmony, beauty.

3. Man having been created in God's image, vital activity¹ in the sphere of finite human spirit is remotely a reflection of the ineffable vital activity predicable of abso-

¹ "No event of thy life," says Dr. Matheson, "is half so startling, half so awful, half so mysterious as thy life itself." *Moments on the Mount*, p. 150.

lute spirit. In a higher degree, the activity *ad intra* of the absolute spiritual organism is declared by the sinless spiritual life of the Son of Man on earth.

If we study His divine-human history it becomes evident that His *death* is not the contradictory opposite of divine-human *life*. The crucifixion was an epoch in the living process of existence of Him who was the Son of God, "born of a woman, born under the law."¹ His death and resurrection do not contradict, but are compatible with the perfect life of self-existent Spirit. If thought be governed by the Christological principle we shall gain a conception both of life and of death different from the hypotheses of philosophy or the notions suggested by visible natural phenomena.

The ultimate revelation of absolute Spirit as life confronts faith *prophetically* in the transfiguration of Jesus, and *actually* in His glorified activity enthroned at the right hand of His Father. There He ever *liveth* to make intercession.² The living Son of Man in His mediatorial reign is the progressive manifestation of absolute life under its perfected character. That manifestation exceeds in true glory, even now, all revelations of divine life in the organic kingdoms of the cosmos, a manifestation, however, whose glory will be final and complete only at His second coming.

4. Absolute Spirit as life is the eternally self-determined rhythm of triune existence. Vital motion is not the going forth of God from Himself towards an otherness, much less the losing of His life in the life of the cosmos. But the life of absolute Spirit is self-motion complete within itself; motion of Himself towards Himself, motion in Himself and for

¹ Gal. iv. 4-6.

² Heb. vii. 25.

Himself. God from the depths of His being produces His own glory; and His glory is the absolute self-manifestation of His own infinite fulness. In the eternal self-produced realm, $\delta\delta\tilde{\xi}\alpha$, triune Spirit *lives* His self-sufficient existence.

5. The triune life of absolute spirit, self-grounded, self-objective and self-sufficient is the original and unchangeable fountain and condition of all finite life, and finite organization. "God is the *Father of life*," says De Pressensé, "the free and intelligent cause of this cosmos in which His perfections are so clearly seen."¹ Living creatures pre-suppose the *living* Creator. Man's spiritual life pre-supposes God's spiritual life. Organisms in the lower realms of creation, and in the kingdom of man pre-suppose the pre-mundane and eternal organism of absolute Spirit. Those who deny that the triune God is the original spiritual organism, have no logical basis for the recognition of finite organisms. The organic unity of mankind or of the world at large will lack an adequate postulate.

III. GOD THE SPIRIT AS LIGHT.

§ 117.

God as Spirit is light. The divine nature is absolute Truth. Truth is luminous in absolute Personality; and Personality lives the life of absolute holiness. In God is no darkness. The possibility of falsehood and therefore of error is excluded. His nature being the light of truth, God is in His Son the fountain of light to the world.²

1. According to the teaching of the apostle John, God as to His *nature* is light; not *a* light, but light in the absolute sense: $\acute{\omicron}\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \varphi\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\nu$. " $\Phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, as it stands in anti-

¹ Study of Origins, p. 514.

² I John i. 5; I Tim. vi. 16; John i. iv.

thesis with unhappiness and sin, is clearly used in I John i. 5, with reference to the full idea of God's holiness, as also light and holiness stand as parallels in Isa. x. 67."¹ "God is *φᾶς* in the absolute sense," says Meyer, "so also all light outside of Him is the radiation of His nature. . . . John rightly puts the truth that God is light, as the chief subject-matter of the *ἀγγελία* of Christ, at the top of His development ; for it forms the basis of Christianity, both in its objective and its subjective subsistence."²

God is light, inasmuch as His nature is in the absolute sense Truth ; and the activity of His will in its eternal relations to His constitution is perfectly righteous. Therefore His self-knowledge is commensurate with His nature and with His self-related activity. The triune constitution of God is luminous in triune consciousness.

2. Truth is the positive contradictory of falsehood ; light the contradictory of darkness. Natural darkness is the emblem of sin—of the lie and of error. Moral darkness is the misery and the ignorance produced by sin.

In nature darkness is the absence of natural light. In the sphere of ethical life darkness is the condition consequent upon the false action of created personality in its relation to God. As God's existence conditions the existence of the world ; as the personality of the Creator conditions the personality of the creature, so God as absolute Truth conditions the world as relative truth.

Man's consciousness of God and of himself contains truth, because the Creator is holy, and His self-consciousness is true. The former may be, because the latter is. The order of apprehension cannot be reversed. It may

¹ Cremer, New Testament Lex. p. 565.

² Meyer *in loco*.

not be said: God is Truth, inasmuch as He excludes darkness; or that His self-knowledge is perfect because He excludes error. As the world is not a condition for God, so the possibility of falsehood among created personalities is not a condition of divine truth. Truth conditions the possibility of any aberration from truth.

Inasmuch as the Creator is in the absolute sense Truth, the same order of thought is valid regarding man formed in His image. The normal constitution of human personality is true and good; therefore falsehood and error are possible. If the normal knowledge predicable of created personality were not true knowledge, there could be no falsehood in the will, no deficiency in the intelligence. If there were no moral light there could be no moral darkness. Darkness pre-supposes light; but moral light does not pre-suppose moral darkness.

3. In one respect darkness is negative. It is the absence of the right and the true in personal life and character; hence follows ignorance of God, of the dignity of personality, and of the world in its fundamental relations. But as the want of righteousness and truth is not absolute, but only relative, this ignorance of God does not involve the total absence of divine light in the world, nor the constitutional incapacity of personal creatures, though blinded by moral evil, to do and to know Truth.

Considered as to its principle, moral darkness is positive. It is an absence of truth, and consequently an absence of sound knowledge, which is generated by the false self-determinations of personal freedom, of autonomy as active in a self-produced sphere of contra-ideal personality. Personality asserts itself in opposition to God; and inasmuch as its self-assertion contradicts God, it at the same time contradicts its own immanent law. There is a self-con-

tradiction of personal life brought about by false action of the will. This false posture of the creature-spirit, and in consequence the perverted activity of personality in all its relations is *sin*. Sin produces a sphere of moral and physical existence corresponding to the nature of sin; a sphere in which is realized the inner contradiction of falsehood and the follies of ignorance. This self-contradictory sphere of ethical and intellectual life in which reigns the lie of self-perverted personality, is darkness.

4. In total opposition to personal life in darkness, theology affirms of God personal life in light. Light is in the absolute sense positive. God unchangeably wills Himself to be what He is—the Good, the True, the Beautiful. He knows perfectly as He wills; He wills as He knows. “His eternal being,” says Martensen, “is transfigured into eternal thought; in Him the life is light. . . . Hence the ancient custom of representing God under the figure of an eye; not that He *has* an eye; but that He *is* Eye.”¹

The eternally free determination of God's life answers to His nature; and His self-knowledge answers to the self-determination of His life. Absolutely good—the only end of His own existence; absolutely righteous—freely active in His relations to Himself according to His triune constitution; His goodness and His holiness pre-suppose and involve self-knowledge and blessedness commensurate with the infinitude of His being. God mirrors God. Spirit mirrors spirit. The truth of self-grounded existence and the truth of free self-consciousness are identical. Shining forth from the infinite deep of His triune constitution, the light of divine life is the perfect manifestation of God to Himself in the realm of His essential glory, the pure, tran-

¹ Christian Dogmatics, p. 95.

scendent effulgence of triune spirit.¹ God covers Himself with light as with a garment; ² who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable.³

5. The essential glory of absolute Spirit is the inexhaustible fountain of the light of truth *ad extra*. Light shines out from God by the first creative word: "Let there be light." In its process of becoming the natural world realizes an order of truth and goodness, reflecting to the eye of spirit the light of the triune God. In higher measure and under a different character light shines out from God by the creative word: "Let us make man in our image." Divine light forms a secondary principle in the personal life of angels and of men. "God is the fountain of pure and blessed life." Hence it is that He is the fundamental condition of right knowledge, that is, of a valid human consciousness of God, of man and of the world. What the sun is to the natural eye, says Bengel, God is to the spiritual eye.

After the influx into the world of the darkness of falsehood by angelic and human apostasy, original light continues to shine forth from absolute Spirit in the order of nature and in the life of personality. The secondary principle of light, continuously fed from its divine source, shines forth into individual and national consciousness, declaring the divine origin and the divine teleology of created spirits. 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.' From above light is shed into the kingdom of darkness, disclosing somewhat of its vileness and hideousness.⁴ The

¹ I Cor. ii. 10, 11.

² Ps. civ. 2.

³ I Tim. vi. 16. Says Bengel: *Unapproachable* to creatures, except as they are both admitted by Him, and He goes forth to them. What is denied to mere *men*, John i. 18; I John iv. 12, will be vouchsafed to the saints; Matt. v. 8; I Cor. xiii. 12; I John iii. 2; Rev. xxii. 4.

⁴ John i. 5.

natural heavens attest their Author.¹ The spiritual light burning in the bosom of apostate mankind is inextinguishable, witnessing among all nations and in all ages to the Sun of Righteousness shining with healing in His wings.²

The fullest splendor of the light of Truth predicable of God as Spirit, shines in the face of the incarnate Son, who is the effulgence of the glory of God, and the very image of His substance.³ In Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world, we may see the absolute light of the Godhead.

IV. GOD THE SPIRIT AS LOVE.

§ 118.

The absolute Spirit is love. Says John: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." Again: "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him."⁴

Love, predicated of divine nature as self-related, denotes the self-communication and self-communion of God. God is eternally the only satisfying object of His life. He embraces Himself with an unchangeable self-conscious volition. God loves God.

The unfathomable wealth of divine love is most perfectly revealed in the self-communication of God the Father to God the Son in the mystery of the incarnate One.

I. Human love presumes two opposite terms, that which loves and that which is loved. Divine love likewise implies the reciprocal correspondence of subject and object. Both exist in the realm of the same life; each being perfectly responsive to the other. The person who loves communicates the whole of self to him who is loved;

¹ Ps. xix. 1.

² Mal. iv. 2; Matt. vi. 23; Rom. i. 19, 20.

³ II Cor. iv. 6; Heb. i. 3. ⁴ John iv. 8, 16.

in turn the person who is loved gives the whole of self to him who loves. Yet in loving, each positively affirms and maintains distinct selfhood. In being loved, each is identified with the other. This seeming paradox declares the truth of absolute love. The best analogy is seen in human society ; as between man and wife, mother and son, friend and friend.

In the normal relation of love I can stand to no object but a *person*, either human or divine ; and I can stand in this normal relation to that person only who truly maintains the same relation of devotion to me. All impersonal objects are excluded ; because the impersonal is incapable of reciprocating love. Genuine love between man and wife, between mother and son, exalts both, enriches both. In the devotion of herself to her son, a mother affirms her distinct personality. Her soul increases in the power of pure devotion by the positive giving of the heart of her life to her child. Self-surrender and self-assertion are equal ; they increase in like degree ; and neither approaches perfection unless supported by the corresponding growth of the other. If self-assertion is wanting in self-surrender, love is weakness. If self-surrender is wanting in self-assertion, love is selfishness. Either moment, if prevalent by itself, contradicts the genius of love.

2. Genuine love in human society is the reflection of divine love. Divine love and human love, to use the words of Dr. Munger, 'are alike, and act alike.' In loving, God is subject. Loved by Himself, God is object. As the subject of love, God both affirms Himself and communicates Himself. As the object of love, God is both receptive and active, self-communicated and self-communicating ; for the idea of love implies that the object loved

is self-affirmative and self-surrendering to the subject of love. Thus the subject of love becomes object, and the object of love becomes subject; the unchangeable infinitude of love implies unchangeable perfect reciprocity of object and subject.

The living God, eternally self-objective, loves Himself eternally. The self-objective of God, the object loved, is His eternal image. Of God the Father this image is the Son.¹ The Son, the only begotten of the Father, possesses divine nature, and is co-equal. The Father begetting and the Son begotten are One; not identical, but One in the sameness of love. The Father loves the co-equal Son, in that the Son is the absolute fulness of the Father's essence, the object commensurate with Himself. The love of the Father is absolute in that the love of the Son is absolute. The love of the Son is absolute in that the love of the Father is absolute. God's love postulates the absolute reciprocity of Father and Son; and absolute reciprocity postulates the self-conscious, free *communion* of each with the other, or the mediating personality in whom and by whom the subject and object of love are a unity, metaphysical, logical, ethical. This unity, this absolute communion of love with love, of the personal subject with the personal object, in the glory of divine life, is the Holy Spirit.

3. The communion between the Father and the Son is as vital and real as are subject and object. In other words, the 'communion' is personal. Not only that the terms, Father and Son, are personal, but that personal also is the eternal condition and organ of reciprocal interaction. Absolute reciprocity involves the consubstantiality and the co-equality of three, Father, Son and Spirit, I, Thou, He.

¹ II Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3.

If the existence of the Godhead were not the hypostatical fellowship of Father, Son and Spirit, divine life would not be the life of absolute love.

God in the communion of love which He eternally bears to Himself as Three in One is the original fountain of love, possible and actual, in the household of His ethical creation. The Archetype of man, the triune One is the pattern after which the finite realm of love is fashioned. God's essential life, His ethical existence, determines the nature of all forms and all degrees of the ethical fellowship of the world.

§ 119.

The law of love in the communion of God with Himself rules in the communion of God with the world. In the domain of creation God loves the objects that are capable of reciprocating His love.

1. Absolute Spirit is active as life, light, love in bringing the universe into existence. Its manifold kingdoms exhibit and manifest the triune God, each according to the measure of its capacity.

Divine law and divine order reign in the constitution and development of the natural: in the mineral, non-vital law; in the plant, the law of vegetable life; in the animal, the law of animate organization. Each lower kingdom is a prophecy of the next higher; and all sub-human kingdoms look onward to the human kingdom. In man, law and order, life, light and love are one in a personal being; a creation capable of willing the law, of affirming natural and moral order, of unfolding and perfecting self-conscious life in the fellowship of truth and love with God.

Divine wisdom and divine goodness may be traced in

different degrees through successive sub-human realms of existence; but the perfection of absolute Spirit, triune life, triune light, triune love, is reflected only in personality. Formed in God's image, man is endowed with the highest capacity of reciprocal love, being capable of living in closest ethical fellowship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. Inasmuch as love implies the positive reciprocal activity of subject and object, of personal life with personal life, the love of God to man anticipates the love of man to God; and man's love pre-supposes God's love. Neither prevails normally in the absence of the other. Human love, or man's love toward God and his fellow-man, pre-supposes divine love, or the love of God toward man.¹ If God were not triune love, and if He had not created man after the image of triune love, man would not have the capacity of loving either God or himself.

The converse is likewise valid. Divine love anticipates man's positive capacity of reciprocal love. If human nature were not originally fashioned for the fellowship of love with God, man would not be the supreme object of God's love, *ad extra*. Further, God's love towards man, notwithstanding his sinfulness and guilt, recognizes and implies the truth that personal human life is still capable of a corresponding response. If amid the darkness and bondage of the fall the prodigal did not from the profound depth of his spiritual being cry out after living communion with God there would be no revelation of grace, and no Redeemer.

¹ Says John : " We love because He first loved us." I John iv. 19. Dr. Munger says : " God has set us in relations of love to Himself, His love for us being the basis and reason of our love to Him." Freedom of Faith, p. 251.

§ 120.

The nature of love as between God and His ethical household involves negative possibilities. The positive activity of God's love towards personal creatures is necessarily limited,—limited to an object that positively reciprocates divine love, or at least to an object possessing the latent capacity of reciprocating it. Love has its own law by which it is governed, its own sphere by which it is circumscribed.

1. Creatures belonging to a kingdom lower or other than the ethical household, cannot be to God the object of His love. The animal is excluded. Kingdoms lower than man are objects of divine power and knowledge and goodness, but not of love. Again, personal beings which, whilst by nature belonging to the ethical family, thoroughly violate the law of communion with God, cannot be the objects of His love. The devil and His angels are excluded. The animal, because not a personal being, has no capacity of response. Evil spirits, because of malice they violate the communion of love, and persist in constant complete violation of this communion, are objects of divine aversion.

Positive love, or the actual fellowship of the personal Creator with His personal creatures, ever pre-supposes the living free reciprocity of object and subject. If not responsively active toward God, men are not and cannot be the subjects of positive divine fellowship. Potentially receptive toward divine love the enemies of God may be; but if the potential does not become affirmative response their receptivity does not become actual, and if not actually receptive divine love begets hatred of divine communion.¹

¹ Dr. Briggs correctly says: "God's love is a love that is eternal in its origin. It is also everlasting in its outgoing toward God's crea-

2. The negative activity of divine love is divine wrath. Wrath pre-supposes wilful violation by the creature of the law of love. Against such violation God cannot but set His face. Sin transgresses the communion of love between the personal Creator and the personal creature. Transgression of love touches God's heart; with inward necessity He turns against transgressors. By violation of the life-communion of love with God, transgressors turn against the noblest good, embracing instead by this act of aversion the greatest evil. The law of positive love, the reciprocal communion of ethical subject and ethical object, being by creature-will renounced, divine love becomes divine aversion. This necessary aversion to wrong, this repulsion of the falsification of love, is God's wrath, and God's wrath may be called the wrath of love. There is no contradiction.¹ Divine wrath is the ethical attitude of absolute love toward personal creatures who violate and contradict the

tures. It is a love prior to time, but it is also a love that enters into time and pervades all time. If we have a real apprehension of the Living God and of the Fatherhood of God we can not doubt that the divine love is a living and an unfolding love, and that it assumes the form of parental love that never forsakes the child from his birth onward through all the ages of his growth, even to the end." *Mag. of Christian Literature*, p. 106. Yet if the unregenerate heart chooses continuously to resist Jesus Christ, the everlasting outgoing of divine love will provoke increasing enmity.

¹ The incarnate Son, who is the realization of divine love, reveals this two-fold aspect. Love to His enemies moves Him to lay down His life to make propitiation for their sins. Says John: Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus was as a lamb that is led to the slaughter. (*Isa. liii. 7*). On the other hand, the enemies of God for whom Jesus prayed and offered His life on the cross are represented in the book of Revelation as saying to the mountains: Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. (*Rev. vi. 16*). Wrath is the obverse side of love to the kingdom of truth and righteousness. Cf. *Mark iii. 5*.

holy life and the righteous communion of love. This relation God sustains, 1, to Satan; 2, to the kingdom of evil spirits, and 3, to wicked men. Toward men God's abnormal attitude prevails in the degree that men determine their personal life by an alien law—the false self-assertion of Satan.

3. Without logical inconsistency, it may therefore be affirmed that the love of God is wrath, and the wrath of God is love. Divine love is positively active towards persons who are positively responsive; the degree of positive divine communication depends on the degree of positive response. Divine love is negatively active towards persons who are negatively responsive, that is, such as are wilfully antagonizing the righteousness of divine love, and the degree of divine wrath depends on the kind and the degree of man's false self-assertion. Wrath does not contradict love, but bears witness to its unchangeable righteousness. Love and wrath are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, righteous love is the possibility and necessity of righteous wrath. Displeasure and condemnation are the judicial forms in which divine love is manifested toward moral evil. Indeed, God would not be love to goodness and truth, if wrath toward wrong were impossible. Says Lactantius: *Si Deus non irascitur impiis et injustis, nec pios justosque diligit.* . . . *In rebus enim diversis aut in utramque partem moveri necesse est, aut in neutram.*¹

Wrath pre-supposes the positive, holy and unchange-

¹ "For if God is not angry with the impious and the unrighteous, it is clear that He does not love the pious and the righteous. Therefore the error of those is more consistent who take away at once both anger and kindness. For in opposite matters it is necessary to be moved to both sides or to neither. Thus, he who loves the good also hates the wicked, and he who does not hate the wicked does not love the good." *Treatise on the Anger of God*, v. 9.

able harmony that obtains in the eternal relations of the triune God to Himself in the glory of His own existence. Wrath also pre-supposes the original and inviolable harmony of the natural and the ethical creation with the holy life of the Creator,—a harmony that underlies the existing perverted order of the ethical world. The ills of our fallen race are protests of the original positive fellowship of righteous love which by transgression is perpetually wronged.

§ 121.

Love and life are predicates of the most profound spiritual intuition concerning triune divine Being. Each embraces the other ; neither can be known but in distinction from and in connection with the other.

1. Divine life stands in the absoluteness of divine being. Love is the free determination of divine will towards divine existence. God chooses Himself as for His nature the only good. Love affirms what absolute Spirit is of Himself and for Himself. Organized life nourishes the necessary unity of triune love with triune being.

God's life is the life of triune love ; God's love is the eternal free communion of triune life. Love lives triune life in the autonomy of absolute freedom.

2. God is life, God is love : these propositions, though declaring distinct aspects of truth, are commensurate and mutually inclusive formulas. Taken together, they may be pronounced an ultimate expression of the triune constitution of absolute Spirit ; they embody divine ontology as revealed by the life of love, by the love of life, in the Son of God incarnate.

In theological reflection we may pass from either to the other, from life to light and love, or from love to light

and life ; provided divine love and divine life be contemplated and developed, each in its reciprocal relations to the other.

3. God, self-existent Spirit, the unity of Life, Light and Love, is the primordial Good, the Truth of all truths, the perfect and original Beauty. The beautiful, the true, and the good are in Him absolute. Idea is eternally realized by existence ; and reality is unchangeably identical with idea. From God, the good and the true and the beautiful are by creative energy and quickening grace freely going forth into manifold kingdoms of the world.

CHAPTER XIII.

DERIVATIVE PROPERTIES.

§ 122.

The fundamental properties of God imply His derivative properties. Both classes of qualities are equally objective and positive. Fundamental properties are in one view more original and more purely divine ; derivative properties are in their manifestation modified by relations to the world.

1. God's particular qualities as they come to view in the personal history of our Lord and through the teaching of Holy Scripture presume in marked degree the reality and relative autonomy of the cosmos, and the antagonizing kingdom of moral evil.

God is self-existent in distinction from the world, which has derived existence. God is eternal in distinction from

the finitude and succession of things in time. God is *omnipotent*, *omnipresent*, *omniscient*, in His relation to the finite *all* of the universe.

God's *ethical* qualities discover similar contrasts. Love becomes holiness in contrast with the selfishness, the worldliness, and impurity of apostate angels and wicked men. Love becomes righteousness in contrast with prevalent moral wrong-doing. Love becomes grace toward the guilty in the work of redemption. Love becomes mercy and compassion in its sympathy with the miseries of transgressors. If there were no misery, there would be no divine compassion; if no wilful ignorance and moral weakness, there would be no divine forbearance; if no guilt, there would be no occasion for pardoning grace; if no finite world, there would be no *omnipotence*, no *omniscience*, no *omnipresence*, *ad extra*.

The derivative in distinction from the fundamental qualities of God seem thus to be inevitably interwoven with conditions of finite existence. Life, light, love are ideas arising from direct contemplation in Christ of triune Spirit in His relations *ad intra*; comparatively, they are independent of finite conditions, and may in this respect be said to be more purely divine. In other words, like spirit, life, light and love may with more freedom, and with less association with creatural limitations, be affirmed of God. Hence I have called fundamental properties more internal, derivative properties more external; but the difference in this respect is only relative. The development of an approximately adequate idea of *Spirit* is not wholly independent of implied antithesis to objects material, inorganic and mechanical; nor the idea of *light* independent of antithesis to darkness; nor the idea of *love* to selfishness, division and hatred.

Thought, however, is not required to stop with this anti-thesis. The doctrine on God implies the connection as well as the contrast between *God* and *man*. Indeed all human ideas pre-suppose the reciprocal correspondence of the object and subject of thought. For this reason it is not anti-Christian nor illogical to classify divine qualities, and to distinguish one class from another. Life, light, love pre-suppose corresponding objective divine qualities by a kind of necessity and independence that omnipresence, omniscience and mercy do not.

2. Bearing this intimate relation to the world and the Messianic kingdom, all divine qualities, especially those that are denoted by the expression *derivative properties*, were by all leading theologians¹ (including Schleiermacher), until within a century, pronounced to be purely subjective, or merely the human forms under which God is known to men and men must think of God,—forms of manifestation answerable to man's limitations. It was assumed that divine being and character objectively considered, have no qualities corresponding to inevitable modes of human apprehension. This hypothesis in effect resolves all divine predicates into human imperfection, even into illusion; and overlooks the fundamental principle of divine revelation and divine activity, namely, the cor-

¹ Augustine and Hilary gave the impulse. They were followed by Thomas Aquinas, not by Duns Scotus. The Reformation on this point wrought no change in metaphysical theology. John Gerhard teaches that divine attributes may not be distinguished from the divine essence or among themselves. *Loci* I. § 108. Quenstedt says that if we wish to speak correctly, "*Deus nullas habet proprietates.*" *Systema* c. viii., Sect. 2. According to Calvin, the celebration of God's attributes in Ex. xxxiv. 6, gives us "a description, not of what He is in Himself, but of what He is to us." *Institutes* I. x. 2. The reaction against false subjectivism has been developed chiefly during the present century.

relation between God and man, between divine being and man's aptitudes. Though it is doubtless true that modes of triune activity *ad extra*, correspond to finite modes of human life and the categories of human thought, it does not follow that finite modes of apprehending God are wanting in objective truth. If this method of reasoning were applied, not to manifold attributes, but to God's existence, it would, if logically carried out, issue, as with Plotinus, Kant, Mill, Spencer, Bain and others, though representing diverse schools of metaphysical and scientific thought, in agnosticism. The God-idea living in human consciousness is inseparable from the form which it takes in belief and rational conception.

3. The Christ-idea, in relation to the question whether divine attributes are real or notional, requires us to maintain that man and God are in vital sympathy, the personal Creator and the personal creature possessing reciprocal adaptations. The objective divine essence is the ground of human personality, absolute Spirit the ground of man's ethical and rational being¹. Necessary forms of human apprehension reflect necessary forms of divine manifestation; I say *necessary*, not simply because the finitude and limitations of personal beings demand manifold forms of divine manifestation, but because the organism of the Godhead determines them. "The Divine Nature," says Dr. Shedd, "is in and with the attributes, and hence the attributes are as deep and absolute as the Nature."²

If God in relation to Himself were not Spirit, man formed in His image would not be spirit; if knowledge

¹ Ebrard: "Das ewige Sein Gottes ist Grund aller zeitlichen Existence." *Christliche Dogmatik*, § 179.

² *Doctrine History*, I. 241. Cf. Strong's *Systematic Theology*, p. 115. "Attributes are those distinguishing characteristics of the divine nature which are inseparable from the idea of God."

and power, if righteousness and mercy were not objectively modes of divine life of love relatively to our race, these divine predicates would not appear in the history of redemption; neither intuitive belief nor Christian faith would constrain us to ascribe metaphysical or ethical qualities to the Godhead.

§ 123.

Theology has found it convenient and important, if not necessary, to classify divine qualities. Classifications have been made from different points of view. At bottom, however, all rest upon the primary distinction between divine *nature* and divine *will*, or between existence and character; one class of qualities being predicated directly of what God is as to His essence, the other class predicated of what God does by virtue of absolute freedom.

I. Accordingly, theology speaks of metaphysical attributes and moral attributes. To the first class belong eternity, infinitude, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence. All are qualities of God's *essential nature*, as contradistinguished from the character of goodness with which He clothes Himself by the free activity of holy will. To the second class belong goodness, holiness, righteousness, justice, mercy, truth. These are qualities of God's *free activity*, as contradistinguished from His essence. This distinction between nature and will, essence and ethical activity, is valid, and susceptible of universal application. It rests on a logical basis, and will suffice for all needful purposes of theological thought.

But in thus classifying divine qualities we have to guard against introducing an element of dualism into divine existence. According to the Christian idea, the

nature of God is eternally self-determined. Divine freedom and divine nature are not to be thought of separately. Divine qualities are members of one divine life. Thus organically connected, eternity cannot in logical thought be separated from goodness, nor omnipotence from righteousness. The divine nature is merciful; and the divine righteousness is omnipotent. Nevertheless, if we firmly hold the living unity of the Godhead, the distinction of divine qualities into metaphysical and moral will facilitate the development and expression of sound theological doctrine.

2. Other classifications distinguish between *incommunicable* and *communicable* attributes, or between attributes which are active *ad intra* and attributes active *ad extra*. But these classifications are of inferior worth. All divine qualities, excepting aseity, the principle fundamentally distinctive of the Godhead, are communicable to man in pursuance of man's divine imageship. The wholeness of the Godhead is active relatively to God and relatively to the world. Not a part only of divine glory may become the possession of man whilst another part has to be withheld.¹ The unfathomable mystery of the incarnation consists just in this, that the fulness of the Godhead became organically one with humanity in the person of Jesus.

3. Another principle of division has been obtained from

¹ Martensen says: "In treating of the divine attributes, our older theologians adopted the division into 'attributa absoluta,' and 'attributa relativa'; that is into attributes which express the relation of God to Himself, and such as express His relation to the world. This division, however, is attended with the difficulty that there are no divine attributes, which, if conceived as living attributes, are not transitive, that is, do not express a relation of God to the world; nor are there any which are not reflexive, that is, which do not go back on God Himself." *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 92.

the trinal distinction of absolute Spirit, expressed by the terms : love, light, life. This answers to the three-fold division of personality : will, reason, and feeling, or the felt unity of life. From these distinctions comes a classification of qualities into metaphysical, cognitive or logical, and ethical.

Taking the three fundamental predicates of absolute Spirit, love, light, life, as the law of distribution, theological thought will have to refer eternity, immutability, omnipotence and omnipresence to *Life* ; knowledge and wisdom, or omniscience, to *Light* ; and goodness, holiness, righteousness, justice, mercy and faithfulness to *Love*.

There is force and propriety in the trinal law of classification; and I shall have occasion to make use of the divisions developed by it. But the trinal law includes rather than supersedes the principal classification. I shall therefore abide by the fundamental distinction between being and will, essence and free activity, involved in the God-idea ; and for lack of better terminology shall employ the terms *metaphysical* and *ethical*.

CHAPTER XIV.

METAPHYSICAL PROPERTIES.

§ 124.

I shall briefly discuss the derivative properties of the Godhead, beginning with the metaphysical attributes and passing to ethical attributes, in the following order: 1, eternity ; 2, immensity or infinitude ; 3, immutability ; 4, omnipotence ; 5, omniscience ; 6, omnipresence ; 7,

goodness ; 8, holiness ; 9, righteousness ; 10, justice ; 11, mercy ; 12, faithfulness.

The enumeration of attributes may be reduced or extended according to the more or less particular manner in which theology unfolds the contents of the idea concerning absolute Spirit.

I. ETERNITY.

§ 125

The triune God is eternal. Eternity and time are opposite, but not contradictory, nor exclusive. The eternal is to be contemplated in a twofold way : 1, negatively, or in contradistinction from the temporal, and 2, positively, or as the mode of objective divine existence.

1. As contradistinguished from the temporal, eternity is without beginning and without end. There is neither past, nor present nor future in the *αἰών* of life of divine existence. Time distinctions are real in the sphere of time. Present, past and future are modes of the existence of the creature. As necessary modes of creatural existence, past, present and future are also real distinctions in relation to God. But temporal processes and finite relations inherent in the economy of time are to be denied of God. As we deny that God is man, so we deny of Him all peculiar modes of existence predicable of man.

2. The eternal differs from the temporal as the Creator differs from the creature, God from man.¹ The difference

¹ Dr. Henry B. Smith recognizes the difference between the negative and positive view of eternity. He says: "eternity implies, on the one hand, a negation of the limits of time, and positively, a mode of being of God in relation to time." But in affirming that eternity is

is not a difference of degree, but of kind. The truth of the eternal is given in and with the intuitive idea of God; the temporal given in and with the idea of man. As God cannot be transmuted into man, so neither can the eternal pass over and become temporal; as man cannot be transmuted into God, neither can the temporal cease to be temporal and become the eternal. Eternity is not interminable duration.¹ Time is not a section of eternity. The conception of God as eternal will become more and more true or godlike as our general idea of God answers more and more completely to His self-manifestation in the person of Jesus Christ.

As in contemplating the eternal realm we rise above the notion of a past or a future in the life of God, so we have also to rise above the notion of a *now*.² To deny of God's life a past and a future, but to affirm of Him an eternal *now*, using this word to denote a present in the time sense, involves a contradiction. The notion of a *present* falls short of the idea of eternal existence as really as the notion of a future or a past. The present or a *now* pre-

'a mode of being of God in relation to time,' theology transcends negation only in form, not in reality. God as eternal was when the world was not, and therefore when time was not. Objectively considered, eternity is a mode of being of God in relation to Himself. When the world becomes, God as eternal exists in contrast with time, but eternal existence is not exclusive of temporal things nor in antipathy to them. Cf. Smith's System of Christian Theology, p. 17.

¹ Dr. A. A. Hodge limits his view to the negative conception. "Eternity," he says, "is infinite duration discharged from all limits, without beginning, and without end. . . . When we say that God is eternal, we affirm that, as to His existence, He never had any beginning, and never will have any end." Outlines of Theology, pp. 142, 143. Analysis shows that this conception only means that God is not man, the Creator not a creature, an important negative proposition, but wanting in positive contents.

² The definition: God is the eternal Now, was given by Boethius.

supposes a *not-now* in a direction backward and in a direction forward. That which was not, is; that which is, will not be. The adjunct *eternal*, instead of overcoming or superseding the category of time, intensifies the sense of it. Qualifying a *now*, eternal is equivalent to everlasting, denoting existence that continues to be the same from age to age.

3. Yet the two ideas, eternity and time, are objectively connected. As God and man are not exclusive, so neither does the divine mode of existence contradict the human mode of existence. Man pre-supposes God. The temporal pre-supposes the eternal.¹ The eternal is the positive ground of the temporal, and its perpetual possibility; for the Creator is perennially the ground of the creature, God perennially the Author of man.

Considering the relation between eternity and time from another point of view, theology has to teach that the temporal stands in the eternal and is ever pre-supposing it, just as the personal life of man pre-supposes the personal life of God. The constant world-movement by which the present is becoming the past, and the future is becoming the present, would cease if the divine mode of existence were itself the constant transition from the possible to the real, and from the real to the possible. The eternal is the guarantee for the continuity of the temporal.

4. The reality of the *origin* of the existing time-world, and the reality of the world-movement toward a goal of consummation are not excluded by the idea of the eternal; in other words, the reality of teleologic transition from

¹ "The words temporal and eternal," Rothe says, "do not in any way exclude each other. The opposite of the temporal is the timeless, and therefore originless; the opposite of the eternal is the non-self-existent." Still Hours, p. 99.

past to present, from present to future, is not abolished. But as man's finite being is in sympathy and harmony with God's infinite being, so are the conditions and limitations of the temporal harmonious with the unconditioned eternity of God. The temporal images the eternal, as the creature proclaims the glory of the Creator.

Theology must hold both the essential difference and the affinity between the eternal and the temporal. Their affinity and difference are to be studied as realized in the person of the God-man glorified.

5. If we abstract the concept of eternity from the trinal being of the Godhead and allow theological thought to be governed by the negations of time, we surrender the solid basis of legitimate inquiry. The eternal will overwhelm the temporal ; the divine realm will exclude the finite world ; and thought will be involved in an inextricable maze. Indeed, theology will be dealing, not with personal realities, but with unsubstantial fancies ; for apart from God's triune being, eternity is not after a positive manner cogitable, nor the temporal apart from the world completed in man. The temporal and eternal are both concrete.

How is the idea of the eternal to be developed and perfected ? Not by itself. Not by abstract reflection. But by the growth of the God-idea. God's transcendent mode of existence theology may apprehend in the degree that it apprehends *God* as led forth to view by the anthropomorphism actualized in the history of the incarnate Son.

II. IMMENSITY OR INFINITUDE.

[126.

As eternal expresses the mode of divine existence in contrast with the temporal world, so infinitude or immensity expresses the mode of divine existence in contrast with the *space* world. Here the same concrete method must govern theological thought.

God is infinite in opposition to the limitedness of space. Of Him we deny all spacial dimensions. He is infinite also in relation to Himself. The positive conception of infinitude we develop as well by direct contemplation as by contrast.

1. God is not limited, not bounded, by space conditions. The economy of space inheres in the finite domain of the creature. But as human being does not contradict divine being, so the finite mode of creatural existence does not contradict the infinite existence-mode of the Creator. Whilst we have to deny finitude and limitedness of God, we may not on that ground deny the essential correlation between finite creation and the infinite Creator.

2. Like eternity, infinitude is given in and with the Christian idea of God. Like time, the finitude of space is given in and with the true idea of man. The spacial is twofold truth: objective and subjective, an existence-mode of man and a thought-mode of human reason,¹ or

¹ Lotze says: "According to the ordinary view space *exists*, and things exist *in it*: according to our view, only things exist, and between them nothing exists, but space exists *in them*." Cf. *Outline of Metaphysic*, p. 87. A difference of far-reaching significance. Space is concrete. Only as a mode of the existence of the world is it an object of thought. Ueberweg represents Lotze's doctrine in these words: "The space-form is the form in which relations, and, since it is in relations that being subsists, in which being appears to us." *History of Philosophy*, II. p. 320. The idea of space as existence in

both a form of man's being and a category of human thought. The immensity of infinitude is in like manner to be apprehended under a twofold aspect: both as an existence-mode of divine being and as the order of divine reason. God's self-consciousness is infinite, like God's existence; divine consciousness being commensurate with divine nature.

Infinite existence and finite existence, immensity and the dimensions of space, are essentially different and opposite, but not exclusive; they are connected and are reciprocally in sympathy, like God and man, like the eternal and the temporal.

3. As the eternal conditions the temporal, thus rendering time possible, so does God's infinite being, transcending space, condition and render possible finite being, or an existence subject to the conditions of space. Finite manhood does not shut out the infinite Godhead. Space as contrasted with immensity involves the limitations of abnormal manhood; not the limitability of God. Even the relative autonomy of the cosmos consummated in man is not to be construed as the self-limitation of divine activity. Finite autonomy as realized in human personality, having been constituted by the divine will and being by divine will constantly sustained, is the perpetual assertion of God's freedom in creation and providence, of infinite will in physical and ethical laws of our finite world. If the absolute autonomy of God did not unceasingly will and thus continue the relative autonomy of man, human freedom would come to nought.

the concrete escapes the logical entanglements of the Schoolmen; also the contradictions in which the doctrine as expressed by Dr. A. A. Hodge involves theology: "Space and time are a genus by themselves, absolutely distinct from all other entities, and therefore defying classification." *Outlines of Theology*, p. 142.

Like the infinitude of God, the finitude of the cosmos, especially the spacial limitations of man, are concrete. Finitude is the normal mode of the existence and processes of the finite. If there be no antagonism between man as man and God as God, it is illogical and arbitrary to assume that there may be antagonism between normal space-conditions of the world and the infinitude of the supernal realm.

Reasoning from the standpoint of the incarnation, the physical and ethical unity of infinite being and finite being in Jesus Christ, space, instead of excluding the presence of divine infinitude, is to be regarded as a generic form of God's immanent activity within the domain of creature-existence.

III. IMMUTABILITY.

§ 127.

God is immutable.¹ Immutability is to be contemplated *ad intra*, relatively to the divine constitution, and *ad extra*, relatively to the world. In both relations immutability is metaphysical and ethical, being predicable of divine nature and divine will. Absolute Spirit, as life, light, love, maintains His identity. In distinction from the continuous change in created persons and things, Spirit is unchangeably absolute Spirit.

1. The life of God is unchangeable in contrast with *normal* life-processes in all kingdoms of creation. The vital development from a germ, or embryo, passing through successive periods of growth onward to the full realization either of individual-type or of genus-type, which characterizes all departments of the cosmos, must of Him be

¹ Mal. iii. 6; Num. xxiii. 19; Jas. i. 17.

denied. In the glory of divine existence, that is, in the triune communion of Father and Son by the Holy Ghost, the difference between type and anti-type, between idea and reality, has no place. God is the absolute triune organism eternally; He cannot be any other than triune personality: without inchoate beginning, He has no growth, and does not by effort attain to realization. The notion of latent possibilities of life is excluded.

2. God is immutable in contrast with *abnormal* and disorganizing changes going forward in the impersonal domain of nature; especially in contrast with the ethical changefulness of man.

Existing of Himself, in Himself, for Himself, divine being can be subject to no determining force contrary to His 'aseitic' life of love, either from within or from without; nor can the violation of His will by creatures, nor the warfare waged by the kingdom of darkness against the kingdom of light, cause or determine change in His constitution or character. Divine life is the life of absolute love; therefore unceasing self-related activity; and activity implies different acts, the distinctive agency of the Father in eternal relations to the Son and the Spirit, the distinctive agency of the Son in eternal relations to the Father and the Spirit. Love is eternally love—its law, relations and character being unceasingly the same. Love is ever love to the true and the right, to the good and the beautiful. Therefore, because immutable, love turns against the false, the evil, the unbeautiful, and condemns wrong from age to age.

The life of love is life in absolute light. God's knowledge and wisdom is all-embracing, His judgment infallible. Divine activity within the sphere of God's objective existence and divine activity in His relations to persons and

things in the world are alike governed by the absolute freedom, the absolute wisdom, and the absolute righteousness of Love. Therefore God's creative word and God's providence ever answer to His essential nature.¹ There can be no imperfection in the divine idea of the world, none in its *normal* history, no conflict in His purposes, no contradiction in His government of persons and things. The same fundamental law reigns through the ages, however great the difference in His dealings with the obedient and the disobedient, however great the apparent contrast between the actual and the ideal world.

3. The divine immutability *ad intra* is to be construed positively. Spirit is absolute Spirit, identical with Himself after the creation of the world as before. The *life* of Spirit is ineffable fulness; it is neither less nor more because of free outgoing life in creation. The *light* of Spirit is ever the self-manifestation of the whole truth of the Godhead to Himself. The *love* of Spirit is unchangeably the self-communication and the self-assertion of God toward God.

These propositions pre-suppose and involve the *trinity* of divine existence. The distinctions between Father, Son and Spirit are immutable distinctions; the determinate relations between Father, Son and Spirit are immutable re-

¹ "God is immutable," says Rothe, "because His being, in all its changes and modifications, remains constantly true to its own conception. . . . Seeing that God, at all times and in all His relations with the world, perfectly corresponds to His own idea, He is at all times like Himself, and consequently immutable." Still Hours, p. 102.

Immutability does not mean that no changes may be predicated of God, but no changes that are contrary to the *Christian* idea of His being and relations to the world. The Old Testament teaches that Jehovah's dealings with His chosen people were modified by their humiliation, and their return to obedience and fidelity. The same truth is more clearly and forcibly taught by our Lord and His apostles. Cf. Luke xiii. 34.

lations. Divine unity is organic unity, identical with itself under all categories of rational thought.

4. Since the idea of divine being embraces absolute Spirit as life and light and love, immutability is not mechanical, nor blind, nor cold. God is not rigorous inflexibility. The pagan notion of Fate contradicts the Christian conception of the Godhead. So does the notion of arbitrary sovereignty, suggested by the despotic authority of an earthly monarch. Neither the unalterable relations of the sides and angles of a triangle, nor the seeming sameness of a rock, nor the blind uniformity of the operation of natural laws afford an object even of remote comparison. In no such sense is the triune God changeless.

Instead, the immutability of God living His self-sufficient life of love in the realm of His glory is the eternal identity of tri-personal communion in *absolute freedom*. No law reigns in the life of God but the law of holy love. The intuition of Christian faith of necessity affirms divine *activity*, the eternal activity of God towards Himself. Triune freedom and triune life of love involve the possibility of creation, the relative necessity of providence and the perfect wisdom of Christian revelation.

And Creation, Providence, Redemption are in truth different acts. If with Dr. Shedd¹ and many theologians

¹ Dr. Shedd teaches that "not only is God's act of knowledge eternal and successionless, but His act of power is so likewise. God creates all things from eternity by one act of power, as He knows all things from eternity by one act of will. As we must employ the singular, not the plural, when we speak of the eternal decree, so we must when we speak of the eternal causation. . . For the divine consciousness, the creation of the world is not in the past, and the destruction of the world is not in the future. . . It is impossible for the human mind to comprehend, or even to conceive of this. But it is necessary to postulate it in order to maintain immutability and omniscience." *Systematic Theology*, I. pp. 345, 346.

If God creates 'all things from eternity' by 'one act of power,'

we deem it allowable to predicate of God but "one act," we resolve the difference between *creation* and *incarnation* into objective unreality. To deny the reality of difference in Self-related divine activity is to touch the ethical life and truth of triunity. When in His relations to the world we deny of God the possibility of a real succession of acts, instead of maintaining we invade immutability. Absolute freedom vanishes. If immutability be unethical fixedness, then to predicate of Him one free act contravenes immutability as truly as to predicate a series of acts. The properties of God may in no respect be limited by any *a priori* notion of His being. The truth of divine revelation by the incarnate Son is objective; and *a priori* notions must be modified by that truth.

Inasmuch as God's life of love is a life of unchangeable freedom, the intuition of Christian faith also affirms God's unchangeable accessibility in His relations to personal creatures.

Accessibility implies mystical fellowship of personal creatures with the personal Creator, by which fellowship the personal Creator maintains His free purpose realized in bringing personal creatures into existence.

Theological thought is not thus drawn into self-contradiction. In bringing cosmos into existence, in the manifold dealings of Providence, and in the culminating work of the new creation, divine immutability prevails *ad intra* and *ad extra*. *Ad intra*, it is maintained in that self-existing Spirit is through all *cons* past and all *cons* to come the self-determined life of love in light; immutability is maintained

then "all things" are from eternity, or eternal like His own being. The world has had no beginning, and will have no end. The idea of creation itself becomes precarious; and theology quivers on the verge of pantheism. This 'postulate' of God, instead of maintaining immutability, resolves it into unfree, indeterminate necessity.

ad extra in that His upholding and governing activity in the first creation and in the new creation is perpetually an activity determined by the same threefold law—the self-sufficient life of love in light. Neither the obedience nor the wickedness of creatures can in any such sense touch God as that He will cease to deal with the work of His hands according to the truth and holiness, the wisdom and sympathy of absolute love.

5. Absolute immutability, understood in this living and ethical sense, is the foundation of prayer, declaring and justifying its reasonableness. Prayer is rational inasmuch as God is immutable—immutable as to the constitution and qualities of His being, as to all His logical and ethical relations to persons and things. Triune Spirit cannot become fate, nor arbitrary sovereignty, nor resolve Himself into the rigid fixedness of a mathematical figure, nor become subject to abnormal human or abnormal spiritual conditions. Infinite love amid the normal and abnormal transitions of man's history is always infinite love, righteous, pure, tenderly sympathetic, unspeakably wise, inexhaustibly rich. Therefore the creature-child may in full assurance of faith approach the Father of spirits.

Prayer would be irrational if God were ethically changeable either in His relations to Himself or in His relations to the world. Were the essence and will of God finite and mutable, analogous to the changefulness of human will or to the finitude of human power, the spiritual aspirations of the Church, always and everywhere ascending to His throne, would be unwarranted. Infidel objections to prayer rest on an unchristian doctrine of God.

IV. OMNIPOTENCE.

§ 128.

God is all powerful.¹ Divine power is to be construed in its eternal relations to the Godhead and in its temporal relations to the world. In its temporal relations we have to distinguish its negative from its positive aspects.

1. Whether we reflect on God's power relatively to His triune being or to the world, it is to be pronounced concrete, a quality of His 'aseitic' life. Power is the energy of His triune life; it is to be studied under a twofold aspect.

Considered *ad intra*, power is the absolute energy of God's absolute being. Considered *ad extra*, we have to distinguish the divine subject and the created objects. Contemplated subjectively, or as the might predicable of divine being, power is absolute; but contemplated as might exerted in and over finite realms of existence, power is modified by finite conditions, and thus relative. As related to Himself, God's power is necessarily infinite; infinite subjectively, for it is the energy of an infinite will; infinite also objectively, for it is power exerted in and upon Himself, an infinite object. Within the sphere of divine existence will is commensurate with life, and life commensurate with love. God is able to do, and He does whatever He wills to do. The might of eternal triune activity answers to the infinitude of love.

As related objectively or to the world, divine power is finite; for the universe as a whole no less than its several kingdoms is a finite existence. God exerts power in and over creatures according to the nature of creatures.

¹ Gen. xvii. 1; Deut. iii. 24; I Chron. xxix. 11, 12; Ps. cxlvii. 5; Isa. xxvi. 4; Rev. i. 8; xix. 6; Eph. i. 19.

2. The divine will, going forth by the creative word, and divine power are inclusive and co-extensive. All created things stand in His word.¹ Each thing, each kingdom is what it is as to kind, as to its possibilities, its laws and relations, by virtue of His creative will immanent in the world. His word expresses and embodies His will. His will is asserted in the mineral, the plant, the animal and in man, in each kingdom according to the idea of each. That divine idea is the idea of a finite object. The power of God exercised in and over creatures answers to His will immanent in creatures. *Omnipotence* is thus by its right relations to the finite *all, omnia*, a finite energy. As the predicate of the triune God power is of necessity infinite; but as exerted in all things and over all things infinite power acts conformably to the finite nature of things and of persons. Divine wisdom immanent in persons and things is the law of omnipotent energy active in and over each.

A mother tends her infant child in accordance with the helplessness of infancy. Her adult son she controls agreeably to the strength and relative independence of mature manhood. The authority of a mother as *mother* is in both relations identical; but its exercise differs, the one from the other, as much as the condition of a man differs from the condition of a babe. The wise assertion of parental authority images the righteous action of God's omnipotence. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. Rothe calls it "a narrow-minded delusion which leads us to imagine that God is so very lofty that we must deny to Him all that makes up the special charm of humanity."

3. Omnipotence is not abstract might, whether related

¹ Heb. i. 3.

to the triune God or to the world. To think of it as an entity, separable from His life of absolute love, is a grave theological error. In Him there is no might but the might of triune life; in Him no life, but the life of triune love. "Almighty power," says Martensen, "from eternity belongs to love as its minister."¹ Of God in His eternal relations to His triune personality theology, if determined by the Christ-idea, must deny all power, all possibilities of might, that are not of the nature of immutable righteous love. The unity and positiveness of the triune communion of holy love excludes the notion of the exercise of arbitrary or abstract almightiness.²

4. There is a sense, therefore, in which God's power may be said to be limited, limited when interrogated by undivine notions of God; not, however, circumscribed or conditioned as to might or intent by any powers, normal or abnormal, external to Himself, but conditioned and governed alone by the goodness and righteousness of His being. God, for example, cannot be arbitrary. He cannot be active towards Himself in violation of His constitution. But such impossible activity implies the positive and immutable perfection of His freedom. Nor is He able to contravene the constitution and teleology either of the created universe as a whole, or of any integral part of it. He is not able, because He does not choose to violate His work; and He cannot choose such violation inasmuch as the activity of His will in the time-world is ever in harmony with His pre-mundane purpose. God cannot as by magic change a rock into an angel; nor can He deal with guilty

¹ Christian Ethics, I. p. 68.

² "How obstinately we all cling to the heathen custom of supposing that the chief characteristic in the idea of God is His absolute *power*." Rothe's Still Hours, p. 105.

transgressors as if they were personally righteous. As there can be no contradiction in the realm of His own glory, so in the dispensations of His providence and in the dynamic activities of His will in the natural world He cannot contravene the system of laws which He has ordained.

Short-sighted human reason may arbitrarily suppose many conceivably possible things which God cannot do. Any arbitrary exertion of sovereign power contravening the normal order of the world, would not be the omnipotence of absolute wisdom and love, but the weakness of finite unwisdom. No miracles of the Bible violate either the original teleology of mankind or the teleology of sub-human kingdoms.

Deeds which men suppose that God is unable to perform, are a limitation of His almightiness only in seeming. In reality the proposition that God can have no purpose and can do no act that contravenes wisdom and love, is no more than a denial of false conceptions concerning His almightiness.

According to the Old Testament the might of God is revealed in the creation, preservation and government of the universe, and in the victories of the chosen nation over their enemies. As represented in the New Testament, the most glorious manifestation of divine power is seen in the superiority of the Son of Man over moral and physical evil, in His resurrection from the dead, exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and His second coming.¹

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 19-23; I Peter iii. 22; Matt. xxv. 31, 32; Rev. xi. 15. Cf. Irenæus Against Heresies, V. iii. 1, 2.

V. OMNISCIENCE.

[129.

The triune God is in Himself. His self-consciousness possesses the whole truth of absolute being. Such knowledge is infinite ; and is the ground of the knowledge of the world. Beyond the realm of His own existence God knows persons and things according to their finite nature respectively.

I. Divine knowledge implies: 1. the distinction between object and subject, and 2. the reality of the object. God is the knowing subject. The objects of His knowledge are twofold: His self-existent triune being, and the world. "As the Almighty is present to things," says Nitzsch, "so are they present to Him." Relatively to Himself, the subject and object of knowledge are absolutely commensurate. He knows His triune being according to what His being is in and of itself. The contents of His knowledge answer to the divine constitution. Both are infinite, the knowing act and the thing known.

In His relation to the world, subject and object are not commensurate ; the subject knowing is infinite, the object known is finite. God knows finite objects existing in reality, not in Himself, not only according to His world-idea, but He knows the actual world also as it really exists, and knows every kingdom of creation, all things, all persons, each according to its peculiar nature and relations.

The object known determines the contents of knowledge, whether God or man be the knowing subject. A sound doctrine on knowledge, whether the object be human or divine, posits this law. As God knows Himself

according to His own self-existing, triune constitution, so He knows the world, finite and temporal objects, according to the laws and limitations of the finite and temporal.

The doctrine respecting omniscience so commonly propounded by the older theologies, that God knows the world, knows all persons and things, all volitions, events, temporal states and relations, in Himself eternally as by one flash of intelligence, amounts in the last analysis to this: either that God in truth does not know the created world, not any person or thing as actually existing, but knows only Himself, His own nature and decree; or that the world has no objective constitution, and that the relative autonomy of human personality is an illusion.

2. Hence, whether we are able to draw the line of distinction at all points definitely or not, it must be evident that of the triune God we cannot predicate a knowledge of finite existence that has infinite contents. The proposition would be self-contradictory. Of Him we predicate infinite knowledge of infinite existence. Object and subject are equal, each to the other; contents and form being both positively divine.

But His relation to finite existences is, as regards these existences, a finite relation. The contents of His knowledge are finite, for the objects by Him known are finite. He knows all created objects according to the constitution, the conditions and relations of each and all. The actual He knows as actual; the possible He knows as possible; the contingent He knows as contingent; He knows the good as good, the evil as evil. Things He knows as things; lifeless matter according to the laws of the inorganic; living creatures according to the laws of organized life; and human personality He knows according to

the genius of personality.¹ Human volitions God knows, not abstractly, but in their (to us) inexplicable connection with the autonomy of human will; free agency, whether good or bad, not alone from His own eternal purposes, but according to the idea of creature-freedom and all the concrete relations, historical and simultaneous, of free agents. Every sub-human kingdom and the human race as a whole, each thing and every person, God knows as that kingdom or single thing, as the human race and each individual person is, or will be, or may be, not as the triune God Himself is and will ever be. If not, if He does not know created objects as they have become and are existing, then either the world is not to Him an objective existence, or His knowledge of it is not *knowledge*.²

If space be an objective mode of finite existence, God knows space as a concrete form of created objects external

¹ To assert that God does not know a possible free event as actual, is not, as many assume, a limitation of Omniscience. It is only the negative form of saying that divine knowledge is *true* knowledge. Those who hold that the world is to God a reality, that time is a necessary mode of man's personal existence, yet affirm that God knows the future as present, the possible as actual, are by unavoidable implication maintaining that divine knowing does not perfectly correspond with the organization and history of the world. And what is this but a limitation both of God's knowledge and wisdom?

² "Relatively to the creature," says Martensen, "omniscience is an omnipresent, all-searching, all-penetrating vision (Heb. iv. 13; Matt. x. 30). In that He knows all things in their eternal unity, He knows them also in their inner diversities and distinctions. It was God who divided between light and darkness; He knows substance as substance and appearance as appearance; He knows the possible as possible and the actual as actual (Matt. xi. 23; I Sam. xxiii. 11); He knows the necessary as necessary, and the free under the conditions which He has Himself imposed on freedom." Christian Dogmatics, p. 95. Nitzsch says: "The omniscient God conditionates all self-life of the creature, and knows it as such. Just as He creates it free, He knows it to be so." In like manner, Schleiermacher: "God foreknows the free, but as free."

to Himself. If space also be a category of normal human thought, He knows it as a valid condition of human knowledge. If time be an objective process of development, if the distinctions between past, present and future be real, real for man and real for the Messianic kingdom, and if logical human thought proceeds necessarily according to these time-conditions, God knows the movements of the human race according to these historical conditions, and He knows every nation, every individual, as each is subject to this time-process of development.

Divine knowledge distinguishes the past from the present, the present from the future, the future from the present and the past. Otherwise, known differences among created existences, all distinctions in space and all divisions of time, all divine promises conditioned on man's obedience, indeed, all historical processes, would be unreal, the unsubstantial images of a kaleidoscope. The logical outcome would be acosmism.

3. From this conception of God's knowledge of the world it follows that omniscience is in harmony with personal freedom, the freedom of angels and of men. In constituting man the culmination of the natural world, its organic head and crown, God endowed him with the authority and faculty of headship. Man is relatively his own law. He may affirm the objective law of his personal life and thus realize normal freedom; or he may deny this law, and become the bondman of falsehood. Freedom is his inalienable prerogative. Though now prevailing under an abnormal character, freedom, or self-determining volition, and the capability of realizing ideal freedom continue to be distinguishing characteristics of manhood. Conformably to this essential prerogative of personality, which by the immanent action of His sovereign will He is ever main-

taining, God knows man ; and with man He deals in the dispensations of Providence, according to this inscrutable knowledge.

4. All contradiction between omniscience and creature-freedom is excluded. God may know personal acts which He has not decreed, acts that contradict His will, the fall of Adam, the transgression of David, the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. But the method of God's knowing wicked deeds cannot itself contradict God's will. What is false and wrong He may know as false and wrong, but the *manner* of His own knowing cannot be false or wrong ; the mode does not contradict the divine immanent action in upholding human autonomy. God knows events that transgress His will, events which under all aspects contravene His purposes, yet God's knowledge and God's immanent will are immutably coincident. For example, the manner of the divine knowing of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas does not violate Judas' ethical life ; instead, the manner of God's knowing is harmonious with God's upholding energy, which is unchangeably maintaining the relative autonomy of the person of Judas.

God's will is concrete ; concrete in Himself, concrete also in His creatures. God upholds His creatures consistently with their nature and relations ; the plant as a plant, the animal as an animal, man as man. Conformably to His creative and His upholding Word, His knowledge distinguishes the ethical from the unethicial, the personal from the impersonal. His will is concrete in the moral and spiritual constitution of man, whom He knows and governs agreeably to this His concrete will.

Hence sound ethical theology has to teach that omniscience conserves man's autonomy, instead of contravening it. If God were not omniscient, if He did not know the

human race in its solidarity, nor every individual perfectly in his individuality from the moment of birth onward, here and hereafter, then there might be ground for the inference that absolute authority is in conflict with individual freedom. Defective or limited knowledge on the part of the moral Governor of the world might legitimately warrant the opinion that the dispensations of providence may violate ethical prerogatives. But perfect knowledge in the Governor of the world, embracing the past as past, the present as present, the future as future, is the guarantee for the inviolability of human personality. Just because His self-knowledge is absolute and His knowledge of man perfect, His purposes cannot contravene His own ethical life, nor can the dealings of His providence contravene man's ethical life.¹

Therefore theology has to deny that God knows finite things, or finite persons, according to an arbitrary or abstract activity of will. The spiritual condition of an individual either in this world or in the world to come, He does not know conformably to a divine mode of omniscience

¹ Dr. Dorner sums up his discussion of divine omniscience in its relation to time and to the future free acts of the creature as follows:

1. "Predestinationism is to be excluded, as well as the denial of all creaturely causalities, if freedom is to remain; but no less, if the absoluteness of God is to be preserved, must a falsely ethical and deistic mode of thought be excluded.

2. "Since God eternally knows all that is possible, future free acts are by no means to be in all respects excluded from divine prescience: God certainly comprehends them as possible things, since only the possible can become real.

3. "All that is real is in every instant transparent to divine knowledge.

4. "But are we to assume that God knows what possible free events will become actual before they are actual, or that He knows them as actual only when they really occur? Certainly God did not know them as facts before they were facts." *Christian Doctrine*, I. § 27.5.

operative independently either of man's ethical constitution or of his particular environment. Such an assumption introduces dualism into God's objective life, and into His government of the world.

§ 130

The idea of omniscience requires a distinction to be made between divine knowledge and divine wisdom.

Divine reason is in absolute harmony with divine will. When, however, theology speaks of God's knowledge in contradistinction from His wisdom, knowledge does not involve causative or determinative volition. Godet says: "If the omniscience of God, especially His foreknowledge, were confounded with His wisdom, everything in the universe would be directly the work of God, and the creatures would be nothing more than blind instruments in His hands." God knows the wrong which He forbids and hates, as well as the right which He commands and loves. Knowledge thus apprehended has no ethical character.

God knows Himself, and knows the world. His knowledge of Himself is the perfect reflection or image in consciousness of His triune essential being and character, of His will, purposes and agency i. e. creation, providence and redemption. As regards the world, knowledge is the perfect consciousness of the nature, the relations and activities of His creatures. Divine knowledge implies that the object known is thoroughly transparent to the divine mind, or that God possesses in idea the kingdoms of the world in all their physical and ethical relations, also as to their possibilities, normal and abnormal.

Wisdom, on the contrary, is ethical and teleological. Its characteristics pre-suppose and include the righteous

determination of immutable love. The kingdoms of the world were formed, are upheld and governed with reference to an ultimate end. That end is the Good. Each kingdom and the entire universe as by His hand fashioned answer to His life of love. The end is likewise answerable to all the laws of nature, to the constitution of man, to his endowments, his instincts and his profoundest needs. To this ultimate end of creation all divine activities in upholding and governing the world look forward.

Though theology has to distinguish wisdom from knowledge, yet from the Christian conception of omniscience wisdom is inseparable.

The ultimate end of the world includes innumerable subordinate ends. Subordinate ends God knows and chooses, ends which in themselves are good and right, ends which are in harmony with the final goal and work towards its consummation. "Wisdom implies a final end," says Dr. Shedd, "to which all secondary ends are subordinate." Every end, subordinate or ultimate, presupposes intermediate agencies. God knows and chooses the right means for the accomplishment of good ends. The fall of angels and of men, as well as the endless diversity of failures, disorders and wrongs consequent thereupon, He knows how to dispose and overrule so that His original purpose may be fulfilled, and at the same time the righteousness of love relatively to Himself, to angels and to men may be maintained.¹

Wisdom is both cognitive and moral. The divine logic which under one view is perfect knowledge is under another view unchangeable truth. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God !²

¹ Eph. iii. 10.

² Rom. xi. 33.

VI. OMNIPRESENCE.

§ 131.

God is omnipresent. *Omnia* embraces Creator and creation. The difference between them requires theology to make a distinction which is of fundamental significance in the study of divine omnipresence. God is present with Himself and present with the world,¹ with the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness; but not present with Himself and the world in the same sense.

1. As we must ever distinguish clearly between Creator and creation, between God and man, so we have to draw a broad line of difference between God's presence in heaven and God's presence in the created universe. Further, as there are different kingdoms of creation, each kingdom possessing a constitution of its own, we must no less definitely distinguish between different kinds and different degrees of receptivity for God in different orders of creation and in different individuals of the same order.

2. Divine presence, like divine love, divine light, divine life, or like God's knowledge and power, is commensurate with divine will. Freely willing Himself to be what He is eternally, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, God dwells eternally in the bosom of His own glory.

As He dwells in His glory, the sphere of His absolute and unchangeable existence, He dwells in no other sphere. God alone, to the exclusion of all other beings, actual or possible, possesses infinite capacities relatively to His infinite fulness. Towards His triune being He is adequately receptive. The Godhead knows Himself, possesses Him-

¹ Heid. Cm. Q. 27; Ps. cxxxix. 7-12; Eph. i. 23.

self, rejoices in Himself, living a communion of unchangeable love, in the absolute sense—a truth which can be affirmed of no existence but God only. The supposition that God might constitute another tri-personal being, the same as Himself, possessing identical prerogatives, relations and capacities, would utterly contradict the God-idea. God did not in the beginning will the universe to be the same as Himself, He does not now, and He cannot.

From Himself its manifold kingdoms differ and must differ in kind, and therefore also in receptive capacity relatively to Himself. No creature is capable of response to Him as God is responsive to God. Nor can we assume the possibility of the creation of a being possessing the capacity of communion with God equal to God's receptivity toward Himself. Hence, it is impossible that the triune God should live in communion with the world as He lives in communion with Himself. *Omnipresence*, God's presence with the finite *all* of things, must be other than His presence with Himself in heaven.

3. Creation is derived, finite, dependent.¹ Such God

¹ "Omnipresence," says Martensen, "must be conceived as the free self-determining presence of God with His creatures, to each of whom He wills to stand in a different relation. . . . God is present in one way in nature, in another way in history; in one way in the Church, in another way in the world; He is not in the same sense present in the hearts of His saints, and in those of the ungodly." Martensen's *Dogmatics*, § 48.

Of the same significance is the language of Dr. Dörner. He raises the question whether God as omnipresent and eternal must occupy absolutely the same relation to objects in space and time, the same in grade, quality, or kind? He gives his solution by recurring to divine causality. God rules over "the extended and space," over "the successive and time"; but omnipresence "is conditioned by the nature of that which the creative causality will evoke or has evoked. If God wills a *κόσμος*, the omnipresence of God in the world and its manifoldness must be in correspondence with these contents of the *κόσμος*, and thus the relation of God to the world of time and to history must

has willed the world to be; as such it must through all the ages continue to exist. Between creature and Creator there is an indescribable difference—a difference constituted and upheld by God's immanent will. Agreeably to this, His immanent will, that is, consistently with the finite nature with which He has endowed the kingdoms of the world, inorganic things and organized life, impersonal and personal, angels and men, His presence prevails in each and all. God is in concrete space agreeably to the dimensions of space. God is in concrete time agreeably to the processes and categories of time. Freely willing creation to exist under finite forms, His presence is commensurate with concrete space and concrete time, being dynamically active in *time*-forms and *space*-forms, neither more nor less. But He is neither limited nor circumscribed; for His activity in finite forms is the free determination of His creative will. His presence is natural in the kingdom of nature, organic in organisms, human in the sphere of manhood, angelic in the realm of angelic spirits. "Everything is filled by God; but that which is filled is different from that by which it is filled." When He enters "space and time," as Rothe expresses it, "it is not as being Himself controlled by them, neither does He in any way come under" the determining influence of either. In other words, the presence of God with the world corresponds to the idea of the world, and to the kind of receptivity for God with which each order of creation, as constituted by His free creative word, is endowed.

4. If it be objected that it is contradictory to affirm of the infinite God a finite presence in finite things, a spacial presence in space, a temporal presence in time, or a be a various and not an identical one." *Christian Doctrine*, § 19. 3, p. 245.

human presence in man, I reply that the objection does not lie so much against *omnipresence*, against the possibility of God's presence in a thing or person in harmony with the laws of personal or impersonal existence as against the possibility of creation. Can the infinite God create a finite world? Can absolute Spirit bring *matter* into existence? These questions are not put to be argued. God and the world, God and man are primary antithetic intuitions of human consciousness. Says Tertullian: "The knowledge of God is the dowry of the soul."¹ Whatever difficulty philosophy may have to construe the relation logically, the intuitions of man and God are alike spontaneous and imperishable. Of all theology, of all theistic philosophy, it is the fundamental postulate that the innumerable finite objects of the universe owe their existence and perpetuity to creative personality, the absolute God. If admitted that the absolute Person can constitute relative existences; if the infinite Will may fashion and uphold innumerable finite orders and individual varieties of things and persons, from a single particle of matter up to man made in His own image; the doctrine of finite omnipresence, a presence of God in a person or thing answering to the nature of the personal or impersonal, is virtually conceded; not only conceded, but also affirmed; not only affirmed, but the contrary hypothesis is excluded.

To say that God may constitute and uphold the law of gravitation, is to say that His immanence in cosmic laws answers to cosmic laws; for certainly God does not maintain the law of gravitation externally, as a farmer directs the course of his plough in the field. The creation and maintenance of natural law implies a dynamic presence of

¹ Against Marcion, I. x.

the Creator according to natural law; the creation and identity of human personality implies the dynamic presence of the Creator in man as man according to the idea and the conditions of human personality; otherwise Providence would not be true to creation. Were God active in the autonomy of personality as He is active in the centrifugal and centripetal laws of the orbital motion of planets, His governing will would contravene His creative word. This general principle respecting omnipresence, conditions the Christian idea of the possibility of a finite creation and of divine Providence. If denied, Providence will logically have to be denied also, and theology will be entangled in the radical contradictions of deism.

5. God fills all in all.¹ The *All* stands in Him, in the infinitude of His fulness. Each thing, each person, no less than the universe as a whole, declares the reality of His presence. "God," as Tertullian says, "has for His witnesses this whole being of ours, and this universe wherein we dwell."² But His wisdom, power and goodness as active in the universe are not identical with His wisdom, power and goodness as active in His tri-personal constitution. The same as to kind, the transcendent action and the immanent action of divine attributes differ as the being of the Creator and the being of the creature differ. God possesses each kingdom after the manner of its idea and office. Each kingdom declares Him according to the measure of its own receptivity toward God. The dew-drop, the rose, the oak, the bird, the lion, sun, moon and stars, radiate rays of supernal light each after its kind. In the first creation the richest and most exalted mode of divine presence is man. The organic head of the world

¹ Eph. iv. 6; i. 23.

² Against Marcion, Bk. I. x.

formed after the image of God, man possesses, both in degree and in kind, unique receptivity for the immanence of his Author. The finite personal is responsive to the infinite Personal after an order to which no capacity discernible in the animal kingdom may be compared.

6. From the exalted presence of God in the Adamic race, though extraordinary and singular, when contrasted with all lower grades of divine presence, we must distinguish God's presence in the regenerate human race, the head of which is the Son of Man. The presence of the Godhead in the person of Jesus is of all modes of divine immanence distinctive and unique; for in Him God and man are one life, one personality. Jesus demonstrates Himself to be the culminating point of all degrees and all kinds of universal divine presence. As man's receptivity toward God differs in kind and degree from that of all other creatures, so Jesus by His conception and birth was endowed with, and by the sinlessness and righteousness of His ethico-spiritual history He acquired, a human receptivity for the presence of God with Himself which constitutes His personality the acme of divine-human fellowship.

Theology, accordingly, has to affirm a qualitative difference between God's presence in man and the animal, a difference between divine presence in the animal and the plant, between presence in the plant and the mineral and all cosmic laws.¹ Especially is theology required to recognize

¹ Recognizing this difference, I must question the soundness of the traditional formula: "totus in omni parte." Dr. Strong says: "God must be present in all His essence and all His attributes in every place." The formula thus understood verges on pantheism. Dr. Strong adds: "From this it follows that the whole Logos can be united to and can be present in the man Christ Jesus." *Systematic Theology*, p. 133. Is the incarnation none other than the presence

the qualitative difference between God's presence in Jesus Christ and His presence in the first Adam. The possibility of this qualitative difference turns, not alone on the miraculous exercise of divine will, but on the ideal constitutional capacity of the Son of Man and the ideal ethico-spiritual receptivity developed and perfected by His righteous life of God-like love. The incarnation became reality in harmony with universal law.

Recognizing the truth that God's presence is relative to spiritual receptivity, we have also to distinguish between Jesus in His childhood and Jesus in the maturity of manhood, between Jesus in the state of humiliation on earth and Jesus in the state of exaltation in heaven. Though sinless at every point of His earthly history He attained to ideal perfection only by His resurrection, ascension and glorification. We may not be able to express it in words, yet theology has to predicate a difference in degree, if not in kind, between the spiritual receptivity of the Son of Man toward the infinite life of the Godhead in heaven from His receptivity when on earth. It is the Son of Man glorified that realizes in absolute form the presence of God *ad extra*. All other forms are partial and prophetic.

7. The universality of God's presence does not exclude the kingdom of darkness, evil angels and wicked men. God is present in the constitution of things, though disorganized by moral and physical evil; present in personal beings, though self-perverted by the transgression of moral law and active antagonistically to Himself; not immanent

of God 'in all His essence and all His attributes in every place'? On this assumption we should have to answer the question of the Schoolmen: whether the Son of God might have become incarnate in an *animal*, as Duns Scotus and some others answered it, in the affirmative.

in moral and physical disorganization as such, nor immanent in ethical self-perversion superinduced and continued by wilful transgression ; but immanent in harmony with the eternal world-idea, and active in things and persons, whatever the degree of disorganization and self-perversion, according to the original type and teleology of each. Hence comes the thorough and persistent self-antagonism dominant in all spheres of moral and physical evil, and the convulsive throes that characterize the *eons* of nature, and the epochs of human history.

CHAPTER XV.

ETHICAL PROPERTIES.

I. GOODNESS.

§ 132.

God is of Himself, and lives for Himself. He is the end, the only end, of His existence, of His life, His activity. Existing and living for Himself, His triune personality is absolutely self-sufficient and self-satisfying. These propositions express the idea of divine goodness. God living the life of love in the communion of Father and Son and Holy Ghost is the absolute Good. Being to Himself the only good, the end and aim of His ethical activity, He is the ultimate end also of all orders of creation.

1. The predicate *good* expresses the truth that the triune Godhead possesses in Himself the original and all possible perfections of life, of light, of love. Existence without beginning or end, knowledge without defect, power

without restriction, self-communion without discord, are one in 'aseitic' life of holy love, wherein blessedness is whole and unchangeable. Triune personality is to Himself the inexhaustible fountain of life, the satisfying object of knowledge, the substantive truth of will, the ultimate end of devotion. The living fellowship of love in light has within this fellowship the adequate conditions of infinite glory.

Himself the ultimate good to Himself, God is the absolute Goodness. Here we reach the highest height. Said our Lord to a certain ruler: "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, even God."¹ No desire, no conception, no imagination can transcend the faith of triune Spirit, in whom the most exalted ideal and the most real reality are absolute unity. Augustine exclaims: "Our good lives always with Thee, from which, when we are averted we are perverted."²

2. Inasmuch as God is the adequate end of His own existence, He is the final end of the world. The universe having been created and shaped after His own idea, it is in all its laws, in its original structure and normal movements, constituted and governed in subordinate relations to Himself. For His creatures, from the least to the greatest, God is the ultimate good. This position and ideal function of all sub-human kingdoms, and of each individual, of all laws or forces thereof; this position and function of the human race in its relations backward to the lower kingdoms and in its relations forward and upward to the triune God, including a particular place, a particular

¹ Luke xviii. 19. Jesus reminds the rich young man "that all goodness in man, as in every creature whatsoever, must flow from God." Godet. "There is no goodness without Godhead." Bengel.

² Conf. iv. 16, 31.

vocation and mission of each man in the complex organism, denotes and reveals the quality of divine goodness in the formation and history of the world. Every mineral, every plant and animal, all normal natural forces and conditions are good, for the reason that each and all are fashioned and upheld in the service of the ultimate Good.¹

Moral evils and physical evils would not appear if the action of all world forces were normal. Disharmony and contrariety have supervened because the original order perpetually asserts its goodness against the false issues of alien powers. For as Hooker observes : " Of that which is good even in evil things God is author." ² If the kingdoms of the world were active harmoniously, each according to its divine idea; if the lower were in due proportion subordinated to the higher, the higher to the highest, and if the highest, man, were in all relations freely active for God as his ultimate end; then would all grades of inorganic and organic existences, from the lowest to the highest, develop and express the immanent action of divine goodness. Each kingdom, each person or thing, would, in obeying the law, fulfil the function of goodness ; and every realm of the universe would actualize that quality and grade of existence for which by the Creator it was designed.

¹ " There is no unchangeable good but the one, true, blessed God. The things which He made are indeed good because from Him, yet mutable because not made out of Him. Therefore, they are not the supreme good, for God is a greater good; yet those mutable things which can adhere to the immutable good, and so be blessed, are very good; for so completely is He their good that without Him they cannot but be wretched." Augustine's *City of God*, xii. i; Cf. *Conf.* xiii. 2.

² *Ecc. Pol.* v. 12, 6.

§133.

There is another doctrine of divine goodness which may be styled *hedonism*. It teaches that all animate creatures are so constituted that their existence is an enjoyment. The parts of a living being, its capacities, instincts and functions, are so adjusted to one another and to its environment, and the environment so adjusted to its laws and functions, that the organization of life as revealed in personal and impersonal realms may be a history of uninterrupted pleasure, in each to the full measure of its capacities. Hedonism in theology corresponds to the theory of Paley in moral philosophy, that expediency is the ground of moral obligation,¹ with which all utilitarian systems of ethics are in accord.

This doctrine contains a measure of truth; but when it claims to be an adequate expression of God's goodness, it must be pronounced superficial and meagre. The affirmation that universal animate existence is seeking a condition of pleasure and happiness is in itself not open to objection. The nature of sentient creatures is doubtless by original law so adjusted to realms and objects below them and to realms and objects above them, and all objects above and below are so adjusted to the nature of sentient creatures, that it becomes evident that their existence is designed by their Author to the harmony of well-being.

¹ "Actions," says Archdeacon Paley, (1743-1805) "are to be estimated by their tendency. Whatever is expedient, is right. Actions in the abstract are right or wrong, according to their tendency. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it." To the objection that "many actions are useful, which no man in his senses will allow to be right," Paley replies that "the true answer is this: that those actions after all are not useful, and for that reason, and for that alone, are not right." *Moral and Political Philosophy*, Bk. II. ch. vi.

But the notion of happiness does not cover the intent of the universe. Goodness is fundamentally ethical and teleological. God is good inasmuch as He freely lives for Himself; and He lives for Himself inasmuch as He is in reality the absolute *End*. A creature is *good* in the degree that its functions fulfil the office assigned to it in the common teleology of the cosmos. In that degree it realizes its divine end, the end freely set by creative Wisdom. And in proportion that sentient creatures are realizing their end, their existence is a pleasure. Man's happiness, animal enjoyment, the floral glory of vegetation, utility of minerals, fertility of soil, the beneficent light of the sun or the exhilaration of spring, each is the *consequence* of divine goodness active in the natural and moral world, not divine goodness itself.¹

An individual organism is good relatively to its immediate or proximate end; this proximate end is good relatively to a nobler or more remote end; in turn, the more remote end is good as fulfilling an office in the economy of the world relatively to God, who according to the logical postulates of creation must be unchangeably the end of His own existence. Thus by its position and office, as a member of the universal whole, adjusted to God, and in its place and measure adapted to the realization of God's ultimate purpose, organized life, whether plant or animal or man, in the degree that processes of life are in harmony with its own laws, responsive to its environment and are fulfilling the creative will, occupies by virtue of such position and teleological action its ideal status, and accom-

¹ Plato said that the Good is not merely in itself, but that it is *disposed to impart*; that its most obvious emblem is the sun, which not merely makes things visible, but also bestows on them life and warmth and growth. Plato on the State, Bks. VI, VII. See Martensen's Christian Ethics, I. § 18.

plishes the end appointed of God. So far forth a person or thing is good, and declares the ethical character of God's goodness.

The question may be put: Is it not true that in forming the world the Creator designed His sentient creatures to have an existence of pleasure, not of pain? Is not man's organization adapted to a life of happiness, whether contemplated corporeally or psychologically? To these inquiries answer may, without hesitation, be made in the affirmative; but an affirmative answer is altogether consistent with the principle that goodness is primarily ethical and teleological, not eudemonistic. To have a discriminating judgment, stress is to be laid on two things:

1. The ultimate end of the world is *God*, not man, the Creator not the creature. The Author of the world does not exist for the world, but the world exists for its Author. God does not live for man, but man lives for God. On this principle all things, whether "things upon the earth, or things in heaven," are constructed, upheld and governed. This is the righteous law which is regnant throughout the universe; and answering to this law of the universe is 'the first and great commandment': "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."

2. Only when natural and moral laws are observed does well-being ensue. Animal life is an existence of pleasure when teleological conditions prevail. The life of men is a life of happiness when their vocation is normally related to God, when as an individual and as a member of society each is active in all spheres for God as the ultimate End. Men are unhappy because this normal order of human existence has been reversed.

II. HOLINESS

§ 134.

God is holy.¹ To make holy, when applied to men or things, is to set apart from earthly and human uses to the service of God. Holiness has thus a twofold meaning, negative and positive, separation from evil and consecration to the Good. As applied to God, the word has a similar twofold significance.

Divine holiness denotes the total opposition of God to all spheres and grades of evil and misery, and His exclusive devotion to the absolute Good and to blessedness, or His unchangeable activity in perfect harmony with love, the essence of His life.

1. Goodness and holiness embrace each other. The absolute personal Organism, the fellowship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, lives for Himself. *Himself* as the all-sufficient *end* of divine existence is the *Good*. *Himself* as *living* His triune life of love for the absolute Good is divine holiness. "His being," says Hooker, "is a kind of law for His working."

To express the same truth under a negative aspect : if the triune God were not the absolute Good His self-determined activity for Himself as the only end of triune existence, would not be holy; and if His self-determined activity did not terminate on Himself absolutely as the adequate End of His life of love, the triune God would not be the absolute Good. The Good contemplated as divine existence pre-supposes holy volition, holy activity; and holy activity contemplated as devotion to Himself as His absolute End pre-supposes the essential goodness of divine Existence.

¹ Ps. cxlii. 3; cxlv. 17; Isa. vi. 3; Dan. ix. 7; Hab. i. 12, 13; John xvii. 11; I Peter i. 15, 16.

2. Since God, the absolute Good, of necessity pre-supposes and includes unchangeable ethical activity for Himself, or the eternal life of infinite love; and since He as absolute Holiness pre-supposes Himself as the all-sufficient End of His triune activity, God is ethically transcendent.

As holy He is absolutely separated from sin, from unrighteousness, from evil, and from all confusion with the sensual, the false and the abnormal in the world of matter and mind. This separation is not physical; the constitution of things and persons is to Him not inaccessible. Nor is the separation either spacial or temporal. Existences in time and space are filled with divine presence, each according to its kind; space and time being the modes of creatural existence which by His creative word He has determined. But the separation is personal and ethical. Triune personality is unchangeably identical with Himself, therefore eternally different from the personality of angel or man; divine life of love is unchangeably infinite love to the absolute Good, therefore different from the finite nature of *things*, organic and inorganic. Because as to personality and ethical life unchangeably self-related, God as the Holy One does not contradict the idea of divine immanence.

In the triune communion of the Godhead holiness denotes the unique quality of His free activity.¹ So in the world, God's holy presence and holy activity denotes the distinguishing quality of His activity and of His presence as thoroughly contrary to the contra-ideal dispositions, volitions and actions of men and evil spirits. God's immanence, the secret action of His will,² is conformable to

¹ Says Wilberforce: "To be the *Holy One* is emphatically His name. . . . From this natal source does the principle of holiness extend itself through the creation." *Doctrine of the Incarnation*, p. 468.

² On this point I have to differ from Calvin and historical Calvinism. Calvin repudiates the distinction between God *directing* the wicked-

the original nature and original laws of the physical and ethical world; therefore His immanence is compatible with His total separation from, and aversion to, the abnormal, the false and the sinful. Nay more; if His immanent activity were not holy; if He were not divinely distinct from finite persons and things, if He were not separate from perversion, disorder, impurity and wrong, immanence would be self-contradictory; for divine immanence implies a dynamic presence according to the divine idea and the divine teleology of the world, not a presence consenting to and sympathizing with the contra-ideal.

3. Holiness expresses the most thorough-going contradiction between the eternal life of God and the self-perverted, ever self-perverting life of the Adamic race, between God and Satan, between the kingdom of heaven founded by Jesus Christ and the kingdom of darkness. Not

ness of men and *permitting* it. He holds that "men can effect nothing but by the secret will of God, and can deliberate on nothing but what He has previously decreed, and determines by His secret direction." The objection is made: "If God not only uses the agency of the impious, but governs their designs and affections, He is the Author of all crimes; and therefore men are undeservedly condemned, if they execute what God has decreed, because they obey His will"; to which Calvin replies that "God's will is improperly confounded with His precept." Men are condemned because they violate God's precepts; yet in violating God's precepts they are fulfilling God's *secret decrees*. "Let it be remembered," he says, "that whilst God by means of the impious fulfils His secret decrees, they are not excusable, as though they were obedient to His precepts, which they wantonly and intentionally violate." Inst. I. xviii. 1, 4. God's will is arrayed against God's will. By His secret will He is so controlling and directing men that they freely disobey His commandments.

From Richard Rothe I dissent on some vital questions; but his views of God's holiness and moral government I can quote, *per contra*, without dissent: "What God wills or does not will, He does or does not will in no arbitrary way, but entirely by virtue of the nature of the object of His volition; only what is good in itself as such can be willed by God." Still Hours, p. 229.

nature and spirit, not matter and mind, not man and God, not the finite and the infinite, are exclusive and antagonistic, as on the one hand Platonism and Manicheism, and on the other the schools of philosophy of Leibnitz and Kant maintain; but sin and holiness, *sinful* man and the *holy* God, the ideal constitution and the existing disorganization of the world, express irreconcilable contradictory opposites. "It is holiness that makes one man differ from another in God's account."¹

4. The holiness of God active beyond the realm of His eternal glory, qualifies all orders and every form of His work, the first creation, the dealings of providence, and the new creation in Jesus Christ. The all-pervasive energy of His word whereby He upholds heaven and earth and all things² is in the twofold sense holy. Sovereign authority over all worlds, the government of pagan nations and of the Christian Church is holy; holy negatively, being contrary to all violation of original law and objective teleology; holy positively, being determined in wisdom and love towards Himself as the ultimate Good, the end of all worlds.

The ultimate status of the cosmos in its final *eon*, including the glorification of the regenerate household and the condemnation of persistent transgressors, will be the consummation of the self-manifestation of the triune God under this twofold aspect, as utterly antagonistic to moral and physical evil, and as forming, upholding and governing all things for the Good.

¹ Gurnall's *Christian Armour*, p. 301.

² *Heidelberg Catechism*, 27.

III. RIGHTEOUSNESS.

§ 135.

The triune God is absolute autonomy. Autonomy involves twofold ethical truth: divine nature and divine volition. Both authority and freedom enter into the idea of righteousness.

Righteousness is unconditional and eternal. God maintains the order of triune life in the realm of His self-existence. Righteousness is likewise relative and temporal. God affirms the right in creation, providence and redemption.

1. God is law, the absolute law to Himself. God is also in the absolute sense freedom. By the unconditional self-determination of His will He is eternally affirming His being. Divine authority and divine freedom enter into divine righteousness. Both are implied by the words of Abraham: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right.¹ Right reigns in God's doing; and God's doing is ever realizing the right. In other words, God's triune constitution is the original, self-existent Good, and the self-existent Good is ever chosen as the law and content of divine will.

In the idea of righteousness these two elements of truth are inseparable. Each pre-supposes the other. Divine self-affirmation postulates the rightness of divine being. Divine being involves divine self-affirmation. If God's being were not to Himself the absolute Good, His self-affirmation would not be absolutely right. Only the divine affirmation of the absolute Good has the quality of ideal righteousness. On the other hand, if the volition of divine will were not commensurate with and did not embrace God's triune constitution, His constitution would not be to Him

¹ Gen. xviii. 25.

the absolute law of righteousness. Being is 'a kind of law,' for God only in that His being is willed, that is, embraced by the self-determined activity of freedom.

As divine being and divine volition pre-suppose each other, so they also condition each other.¹ Neither could be if the other were not. God's being would not be ethically good if not self-determined ; self-determination would not be absolutely right if will did not embrace the absolute Good. The divine will cannot fall away from the divine constitution. To affirm His triune constitution is the necessity of God's freedom. His freedom is absolute because the necessity of affirming His own constitution is absolute. Nor may we think of God's being as possibly not affirmed by His will. The idea of the life of triune love logically includes self-affirmation. Whilst sound theology has to distinguish between divine being and divine will, or, to use Hooker's terms, between God as "law" to Himself and God as "working," theology must deny two things: 1. that the divine being is not in the absolute sense self-determined, and 2. that the divine will may affirm a volition according to a law other than divine being.

When theology distinguishes between divine being and divine will, yet asserts their indissoluble unity in the life of

¹ Compare the profound and elaborate discussion of the two essentials of the Ethical Good by Dr. Dörner in his *Glaubenslehre*, vol. I. § 31. He says, "Jene all. Sittlicheit, ob Gott gut ist, weil er das gute will, oder ob das Gute gut ist, weil Gott es will, muss so beantwortet werden, dass Beides anerkannt wird: Gott will das Gute, weil es gut in sich ist, und es ist gut, weil er es will." God chooses (wills) Goodness because of and in itself it is good; and Goodness is good because God chooses (wills) it. "In the interest of religion and science, both essentials, must be affirmed, but both cannot be affirmed at the same time, unless the original Good, which is God, is viewed not merely as simple Existence, whether it be ethical necessity or freedom, but as in itself differentiated Existence, whose members are absolutely correlative and reciprocally condition one another."

triune love, it declares absolute righteousness—righteousness as an ethical property of God in His eternal self-related life of love. Says an old divine: "God wills nothing but what is righteous, and therefore it is righteous because He wills it."

2. The question may be put, What is the absolute right? Is God's volition right just because God wills it? Does divine will make the right? Or does God will the right because the authority of Right binds the self-determination of His will? Does the Right exist without free volition?

This supposed alternative raised by philosophy is not objectively real. Neither class of questions proceed on a valid postulate. Theology may not say that divine purposes are righteous just because God's sovereign will has decreed them. Nor may the right be supposed to be a reality independently of free affirmation by divine will. Righteousness as a property of God is the eternal union of both. It may be said that Right is divine existence having binding authority for the activity of divine will; but Right as existence is self-conscious and free; it is existence that is absolutely self-determined; otherwise the divine constitution would not be absolute *ethical* existence. On the other hand, it may be said that whatever God wills is right, right because He wills it. But divine freedom by its very idea can choose only the Good. The absolute being is the truth of absolute freedom.

Is then God under obligation to do right? In accordance with the genius of the ethical principle which has been stated, theology may give an affirmative answer. But the authority binding God's will is none other than His triune constitution, His life of triune love. To assume an authority transcending Himself or a ground of obliga-

tion other than His own self-determined, self-satisfying existence, contradicts the ethical idea of God.

If the question be whether God is bound by 'the eternal nature of things,' the answer is in kind the same. Theology may think of God's activity as bound by 'the eternal nature of things,' but the 'eternal nature of things' is none other than His own nature. If we assume or imply an authority for God other than His triune selfhood we contradict divine 'aseity.' The truth of the 'categorical imperative' of Kant confronts us unconditionally in the self-related righteousness of *God*, not in man.

3. The righteousness of God is in the first instance to be studied in His relations to Himself. He maintains the order, proportion, harmony and beauty of His life of triune love.

In the triune constitution of the Godhead, the Father is principal; the Son is of the Father; the Holy Spirit is the unity of the Father and the Son. The eternal free interaction of the life-communion of absolute love is righteous. Righteousness maintains the prerogatives and functions of Father and Son and Spirit in one essence, one organism. The notion of possible disharmony or ethical deficiency is excluded. Each member of the one organism fulfils functions in absolute accord with the perfection of the divine constitution. Therefore the life-communion of triune love is a communion of infinite blessedness. Infinitely blessed it is inasmuch as the communion is unchangeably right and good.

4. God being unchangeably righteous, He is the foundation of the physical order of the world. In the sub-human kingdoms of nature there is law and organization, proportion and teleology, because God's being is right, because

the purposes of the divine will as realized in nature harmonize with the divine life. The creating, upholding and governing activities of His will are unchangeably in accord with the rightness of His transcendent being. Unconscious kingdoms are fashioned in all their qualities by a moral intent. As Henry W. Parker says: Art "entered largely into the plan of creation, and is a development of it."¹

The disorder and confusion and contradiction now prevalent are possible because the immanent activity of the divine will is right; God is ever firmly maintaining the ideal order established by His creative word, in opposition to foreign forces active contrary to the original scheme and teleology of the cosmos.

God as the righteous God is the ground of the *moral* order. Throughout the kingdom of man the principle of right is fundamental—fundamental in the institution of the family, in the organism of society, in the history of nations and in the development of civil government. Divine right is ultimate truth, felt, recognized, and asserted by all nations and all individuals, under forms answerable to the character and grade of their civilization. Wrong-doing is possible among men because humanity as to its idea, its original organization, its unchanging final cause, and its actual working, in so far as positively governed by divine Providence, is *right*.² If the words of Pope are applied to

¹ "The voice that evoked the earth continually and silently declares, 'Let the earth bring forth more abundantly through created intelligence'; and the commission lies upon all the sons of the first gardener, to make the world an Eden, and to dress and keep it."

"Man puts into a machine something of the intelligence which the All-Wise has put in him." *Spirit of Beauty*, p. 194, 195.

² "Inasmuch as the bad is restrained in the world, and for ever deprived of necessity, and the good is preserved exclusively in its eternity, the righteousness of God evidences itself. . . . Wherever in the preservation of life the separation of the bad from the good, the

the normal structure of human life and to the normal activities of the human will, they are valid: "Whatever is, is right."¹

The wrongs of society committed from age to age are perpetually possible, inasmuch as the activity of God's upholding and directing will in all epochs and periods of history is righteous. True to the moral order of human life, His will unchangeably maintains conscience and the law of right in human personality, and is uninterruptedly working in the process of the ages in perfect accord with the original teleology of mankind. Did God's immanent activity cease to be positively righteous, transgression and wrongs would likewise cease; the ethical constitution of man would collapse; ethical principles would perish; and all ethical relations vanish. Sin by its necessary pre-suppositions bears testimony to God's unchangeable righteousness.

5. Righteousness and holiness are to be distinguished, yet they are divine properties closely allied. Righteousness is the definite character of holy activity.

God is *holy* in that His life of love is perfectly in harmony with the law of absolute Good. Himself the only End of triune love; His self-related, self-determined activities have direction unchangeably toward the Good, toward His triune existence as His self-satisfying End. Holiness embraces righteousness. "Holiness," says a Scotch di-

removal or extinction of the bad and the animation of the good prevails, there goodness is at the same time righteousness and righteousness is the preservation of consummate goodness." Nitzsch's Christian Doctrine, p. 172.

"And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.*

In its application to *actual* history the sentiment is unchristian and unethical.

* Essay on Man, I. 294.

vine, "will not suffer God to do any thing but what is righteous."

God is *righteous* in that all divine counsels and acts answer to the free determinations of His will, and free determinations of His will stand in His life of absolute love.

Relatively to the sinful state of the Adamic race, holiness expresses God's separation from the defilement of moral evil, from the impure and unideal, from the disorganization and moral rottenness of the world. Righteousness is the assertion of right against wrong, of truth against falsehood, of holiness against sinfulness.

Of righteousness the direct antithesis is the wrong done by transgressors toward God and toward man; of holiness, it is the foulness and loathsomeness of sin.

As confronting Christian faith divine holiness and divine righteousness *ad intra* are different forms of the free, immutable, ideal, inter-communion of the Father and the Son in the self-determined unity of the Holy Spirit.

IV. JUSTICE.

§ 136.

Righteousness approves the right and condemns the wrong. The approval of right-doing involves reward, the condemnation of wrong-doing involves punishment. Rewards in harmony with personal worthiness and punishments in harmony with personal demerit declare retributive righteousness; and retributive righteousness is expressed by the term *justice*.

Justice maintains prerogatives of Right in the sphere of personality—the personality of the Creator and the personality of creatures.

Like love, justice is positive; it maintains the necessary connection between blessedness and righteous-

ness. Justice may also become negative, maintaining the necessary severance of blessedness from unrighteousness and wickedness.

1. In the glory of divine existence the triune communion of love is absolute; and the activity of justice is unchangeably positive. God is just to Himself. Says Dr. Dwight: "The justice of God respects first Himself."¹ Living unchangeably for the true Good, He is unchangeably blessed. Ideal ethical necessity and the perfection of blessed existence are one.

The same idea may be expressed thus: the tri-personal communion of love and the blessedness caused by tri-personal communion are eternal. In the three-fold relation which God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bears to Himself, He unchangeably wills the absolute right, and absolutely does the right; He ever perfectly realizes the order, proportion, prerogatives, harmony and beauty of the Godhead. To state this truth negatively, it may be said: in His triune relation to Himself there can be no want, no disproportion, no deficient activity, no unrealized possibility. The triune God is eternally actualizing in perfection the idea of right, and therefore eternally enjoying a state of blessed existence worthy of Himself as absolutely holy and righteous.

2. Just to Himself, God is just toward men. "The justice of God to Himself is the highest and first act of justice to His creatures."²

The mode of action of justice in the ideal communion of love between God and personal creatures is likewise exclusively positive. When the free activity of man answers perfectly to the law of love reigning in God's kingdom

¹ Dwight's Theology, I. 194.

² Ibid.

and immanent in the human constitution, man is approved of God and self-approved; agreeably to the measure of his capacities, he enjoys the unspeakable peace and felicity of this righteous communion.

Blessedness is ethical; being of the nature of obedience.¹ When obedience is perfect; when man fulfils the law of love toward God and his neighbor, blessedness is perfect; perfect in proportion to the degree of his receptivity and positive personal fitness. Augustine says: "a happy life is joy in the truth."² Justice maintains inviolate the internal connection between obedience to the law of righteous love and the positive ethical well-being corresponding to the obedience of love. The union between rewards and righteousness is fixed and unalterable. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether; . . . in keeping of them there is great reward."³

§ 137.

In the relation which God sustains to fallen angels and to fallen men the character of the action of justice is negative. Justice condemns moral wrong. The sufferings involved in condemnation are the penalties of justice.

1. Transgression does violence to the communion of righteous love existing between God and man. In firmly maintaining the truth of this communion, justice asserts itself against the violence done by transgression. Approval of the right is condemnation of the wrong. Vindication of the right is antagonism to the wrong. If justice

¹ "Obedience is paid either to the divine *truth*, or to the divine command. The latter is the fruit of faith; the former is *faith* itself." Bengel.

² Conf. x. 23, 23.

³ Ps. xix. 9-11; Heb. x. 35.

maintains the prerogatives of righteous love with inflexible firmness and almighty power, it with identical firmness and power antagonizes the violence done to righteous love by transgressors. If approval of the right be necessary and unalterable, the condemnation of the wrong is necessary and unalterable.

If justice approves the right with infinite pleasure, bestowing on the subjects of obedience the *blessings* of righteousness, justice also by such approval turns against the wrong with infinite displeasure, visiting on the subjects of disobedience the judicial evils of their guilt; and the realization of these judicial evils by the guilty is the *curse*. The curse attending wilful wickedness is the opposite pole of the blessing attending righteousness. Since right-doing and wrong-doing are contradictory ethical opposites, divine justice cannot be judicial indifference to wrong. Indifference to wrong would be indifference to right. If on wrong-doing justice could not visit penalties, on right-doing justice could not bestow blessings. In all dealings with personal beings, God's unfailing love necessarily affirms the principle of retributive righteousness.

Human misery is not the effect of God's causative will, nor of the working of the normal order of the world. Sufferings are rooted in guilt.¹ Guilt entails sufferings with the same inflexible necessity as righteousness bears the precious fruit of divine approval and self-approval.

Righteousness can approve and reward only the right; and for man the only fundamental right is to love God with all the heart. Christianity gives no warrant for postulating any arbitrary act of divine will. Ethical theology

¹ God's moral kingdom, planned for self-regulation, and in analogy with the laws of growth, "hides the fruit of punishment within the seed of disobedience." *Freedom of Faith*, by Dr. Munger, p. 323.

has to maintain that justice cannot conjoin any kind or grade of happiness with the violation of the communion of righteous love between the personal Creator and personal creatures. If such ethical self-contradiction were supposed, theological thought would turn justice into injustice. The supposition that God at will might bestow on the violators of righteous love the rewards of blessedness, here or hereafter, would be equivalent to a denial of God's righteousness and the moral order of the world.

As justice inflexibly upholds and rewards only the right, wrong-doing by its direct antagonism to right must produce consequences and entail penalties corresponding to its anti-righteous character. In this negative necessity, as actualized in the personal experience and history of transgressors, divine justice is manifest. The good and the right are upheld with sovereign almightiness and honored in that the pains of guilt are inseparable from the life of the wrong-doer.

2. Penalties may be studied in somewhat closer relation to love. God as love is the just God. Penal justice is a quality of violated love. The law of love becomes the law of retribution.

So far from being incompatible with the infinitude of holy love, justice active under negative forms is its exponent and executor. Holy love communicates its blessedness to all who are positively responsive to the righteous demand: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. This blessedness justice executes. Those who wilfully renounce and persist in renouncing the gifts of love, are repelled by love. The love that wins the response of love and delights in it, abhors the response of hatred. The same principle active positively toward the moral good is active negatively toward the moral evil. In other words, the condemnatory

attitude of righteous love toward man's hatred of good is the reverse side of the approval of man's delight in the good. Love hates the bad inasmuch as love rejoices in the good. The justice of love punishes the wrong-doer for the reason that the justice of love rewards the right-doer. If God active in the moral order of the world did not entail misery on transgressors, He would not confer blessing on His faithful servants. The same principle works contrary effects in contrary moral characters.

3. Blessedness and misery, like right and wrong, are directly contradictory. Right and blessedness embrace each other. So wrong and misery live together; misery being the child and fast companion of sin. Sin does violence to truth and law,—to natural and moral truth, to the law of man as really as to the law of God. Man in all his physical and social relations, man in the reciprocal communion of love between himself and God, sin wrongs. "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."¹ Evils attend self-inflicted wrong in both spheres. Two kinds of misery are therefore ever produced by sin, natural misery and moral misery.

¹ Augustine enforces this truth in many places. "Thou forsakest nothing that Thou hast made, that the unjust might stumble against Thee, and justly be hurt, withdrawing themselves from Thy gentleness, and stumbling against Thine uprightness, and falling upon their own roughness." Conf. v. 2. "Nothing can be found more ingenuous than Thou; and what is more harmless, since it is a sinner's own works by which he is harmed." Conf. II. vi. 13. Providence does not make men sinners, but "orders them after they have sinned. For through sin reaching them with an ill purpose they are forced to understand the Scriptures ill, that this should be itself the punishment of sin." Augustine's Com. on Ps. vii. 15. The same general principle, relatively to good and evil, is maintained by Butler in his Analogy; "The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency; and may increase it further, till, peculiar conjunctions perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect." Part I. v. 4.

Bodily pains, poverty, social disorders, innumerable gradations of outward ills are effects caused by the violations of fundamental laws, natural and social.

Moral misery is the necessary consequence of moral wrong. Moral wrong in principle is the refusal to love God with all the heart, the refusal to love my neighbor as myself; a refusal which is the voluntary violation of the fundamental moral order of the world. And this violation of the moral order is the tap-root of all miseries. Moral disorder conditions natural disorder. Moral wrong, by the stability of the judicial relation between God and man, puts the doers of wrong under condemnation; and condemnation covers the whole constitution of the wrong-doer. Miseries are, therefore, effects proceeding, in the first instance, not from intellectual ignorance, not from physical weakness, nor from the unconscious and undesigned infraction of natural laws, but proceeding from the self-determined transgression of the ethico-religious laws of human life; —the transgression of the righteous love of the Creator by the will of the personal creature.

The vindication of justice appears accordingly under the action of natural law and of moral law. In a world where transgression is enthroned, that is, aversion to fundamental right and the voluntary doing of the fundamental wrong, justice entails suffering in two ways at the same time; organically and ethically.¹ Of penal justice the consequences work in the body and in the soul, in the reason and in the will, in individuals and in families, in nations and in governments,—work in all relations and spheres of abnormal human existence. Judicial consequences are immediate, continuous, irremediable. Irremediable and continuous, because justice can reward only right-doing. There is no

¹ Rom. i. 18; ii. 8, 9.

remedy for the persistent wilful transgression of the law of love.

The genius of love is immutable. Love by eternal law is love to God, love to the good, to the right, to the true, to the beautiful; of necessity, therefore, love is the enemy of the false, the wrong, the ugly, the evil, the enemy of the character of every personal subject that sets himself against divine love. There is no alternative. The immutable self-assertion of love under the form of justice carries the judgment of condemnation into thorough execution. History, conscience and Christian revelation witness to the fact that penalties prevail in realms of transgression with persistent force.

The rewards of obedience and the penalties of disobedience are opposite modes of the action of the same principle; the one of justice in its relation to right-doing, the other in its relation to wrong-doing. Penalties and blessings are diverse manifestations of God's ethical constitution, the triune communion of absolute love.

V. MERCY.

§ 138.

God is merciful. Mercy, a manifestation of divine love, appears in God's attitude toward the pains and miseries of rational creatures. He sympathizes with man in the losses, sufferings and impending evils of his fallen condition; and He yearns to relieve the transgressor with an infinite intensity of affection.

I. As we cannot speak of the negative action of love, or of the negative action of justice, within the realm of the divine glory, so we do not think of God as the object of compassion to Himself. From this negation, however, it does not follow that mercy is not a quality of divine being,

or that compassion, sympathy and forbearance are truthless anthropomorphisms, only human forms of thought concerning the nature of the Godhead. In the eternal relation of the triune God to Himself, mercy is active under the positive character of love, of righteous self-devotion ; it is the infinite sympathy of the Father with the Son in the Holy Spirit.

As love becomes wrath toward hatred of Love, as goodness works evil in and among those who renounce goodness, and righteousness becomes justice—the unalterable approval of right-doing and the unalterable condemnation of wrong-doing—so love becomes mercy to the children of love led captive by the kingdom of darkness. Divine compassion toward the person of the transgressor is vividly represented by our Lord in the parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son.¹

2. Mercy and justice are in perfect accord. God's sympathy with men suffering the miseries of transgression does not contradict God's condemnation of wrong nor His displeasure with all grades of transgression. Justice is merciful. Mercy is just. Tender compassion toward the personal subject of moral evil is righteous, being thoroughly in harmony with the law of holy love, which seeks to impart its blessing to all capable of receiving blessing. Condign punishment of wrong is compassion toward the

：“The Lost Sheep and the Lost Piece of Money set forth mainly the *seeking* love of God; while the Prodigal Son describes rather the rise and growth, responsive to that love, of repentance in the heart of man. The same truth is presented successively under different aspects, God's seeking love being set forth first, and this not without reason, since we thus are taught that all first motions toward good are from Him. . . . The antecedent working of the Spirit in the heart, the going forth of His love, must have found the wanderer before he could ever have found his God, or found himself.” Notes on the Parables, by Trench, p. 303.

subject of wrong-doing ; for moral and spiritual well-being is possible only in the way of constant obedience to the righteousness of love.

The cause of all miseries is sin. As God with infinite compassion sympathizes with the miseries of sinners, He is by so much the enemy of the cause producing these miseries. Mercy no less than justice moves Him to condemn, antagonize and destroy the kingdom of sin. "Righteousness and judgment are the foundation of thy throne: Mercy and truth go before thy face."¹ It belongs to the same power both to judge and to do good. If God were indifferent to transgression He would be indifferent to the natural and social consequences of transgression ; sin and blessedness being by His own unchangeable nature and by the moral order of the world absolutely exclusive. In other words, if God were not inflexibly just and absolutely holy, He could not be infinitely merciful. Mercy is rooted in immutable righteousness and justice.² God is angry with the sins of the sinner, inasmuch as He is compassionate towards the sufferings of the sinner.³ Mercy and

¹ 1's. lxxxix. 14.

² Clement of Alexandria says: "As the mirror is not evil to an ugly man because it shows him what like he is; and as the physician is not evil to the sick man because he tells him of his fever; so neither is God, who reproves, ill-disposed towards him who is diseased in soul. For He does not put transgressions on him, but only shows the sins which are there, in order to turn him away from them. So God is good on His own account, and just also on ours, and He is just because He is good." The Instructor, Bk. I. ch. ix.

³ Dr. Matheson draws the line of difference between human and divine anger with nice discrimination: "Human anger resents the *hurt*; divine anger resents the *wrong*; human anger is wounded in its *pride*; divine anger is wounded in its *heart*. Human anger laments the injury to self; divine anger laments the injury to God. Human anger cries out for revenge; divine anger cries out for atonement." Voices of the Spirit, p. 20.

truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.¹

3. No dealings of God with our apostate race in the course of Providence, no earthquakes, no volcanic eruptions, no "pestilence that walketh in darkness," may be represented as cruel. Wars, pestilences, and the desolations caused by the blind powers of nature, are exponents of an order of things in itself good, but disturbed by persistent forces foreign to the scheme and teleology of the world. Nor may a sound doctrine of righteousness pronounce cruel either the terrible judgments by Jehovah's authority executed upon the Shemitic tribes by the Israelites, or the awful doom visited in fulfilment of our Lord's prophecies by the Roman army upon the city of Jerusalem. The horrors suffered by recreant Jews were the legacy bequeathed by righteous love wronged by the stubborn renunciation of Truth.

Cruelty is the unwise and wrongful infliction of suffering, wrongful as to the kind of penalty, or, if the kind be righteous, wrongful as to the degree or manner of infliction. Where no manner of injustice is done to the subjects of suffering there can be no cruelty. Sufferings inflicted by righteousness and wisdom are demanded by mercy as really as by justice. Cruelty is a quality of ignorance, of unrighteousness and folly.

VI. TRUTH OR FAITHFULNESS.

§ 139.

God is faithful. Faithfulness bears a relation to His triune existence, and to the world.

1. God is unchangeably true—true to His self-existent constitution. His sovereign will declares and executes

¹ Ps. lxxxv. 10; Prov. xvi. 6.

those things only that are worthy of the Godhead. The trinal life of love realizes absolute unity and harmony. The purpose of creation and the realization of the purpose maintain the absolute personality and transcendent existence of His triune being. The dispensations of Providence involve no confusion of divine personality with finite nature, no confusion of the divine will with the freedom of created orders of personality, no compromise of holiness, wisdom or goodness. Messianic revelation vindicates His essential nature as righteous love. Redemption by the humiliation of God in the person of the incarnate Son glorifies the freedom of 'ascity.'

Under whatever aspect we may contemplate God's existence, or His self-related activity, or His activity in creation and providence, or the difference between His triune personality and the world, we discern methods of action and manifestations of life consistent with the highest conceivable metaphysical, logical and ethical perfection.¹ The more closely, the more profoundly we contemplate God in all His works and relations, the richer, the more exalted become our conceptions of truth, goodness and beauty.

2. Relatively to the world, faithfulness implies the free action of God's governing will according to His word, or the perfect harmony between His self-manifestation by His words and in His deeds.

This principle may be expressed thus: The dealings of God with nations and individuals in the course of His

¹ Augustine says: "Thou lovest, and burnest not; art jealous, yet free from care; repentest, and hast no sorrow; art angry, yet serene; changest Thy ways, leaving unchanged Thy plans; recoverest what Thou findest, having yet never lost; art never in want, whilst Thou rejoicest in gain. Thou payest debts while owing nothing; and when Thou forgivest debts, lovest nothing." Conf. Bk. I. iv.

providence correspond with the revelation which He has made of Himself in Jesus Christ, and with His purposes declared by the economy of grace.

Perfect harmony between Himself and His conduct toward men, between His promises and the experiences of our race, can never fail. The impossibility of failure, the stability of faithfulness, spring from sovereign freedom.

God's freedom is absolute. It is absolute in that His will stands in His triune being as its only ground. God is what He is of Himself; of Himself, He cannot be any other than what He is. Self-grounded existence is the necessity of His triune personality; freedom and necessity being but different phases of ethical 'aseity.' Divine freedom is necessary; divine necessity is free. That which God wills to exist becomes real according to His purpose; for there are no conditions of the existence of the world other than His will; and what He promises or threatens will come to pass after the manner promised or threatened;¹ but no promise or threat invades or ignores the prerogatives of personality.² His word is the utterance of His love. His love is the essence of His life. His life is necessarily and unchangeably free. His words, accordingly, have their ground in the immutability of His ethical life.

As divine life excludes from itself whatever contravenes divine holiness, so the divine word renders impossible any intermediate or ultimate issues which would an-

¹ Rom. ii. 8; II Thess. ii. 12.

² Dr. Matheson says: "If my personality is to melt into the being of God as a cloud melts into the blaze of sunshine, then surely is God not my life, but my annihilation. He can no longer say of me: 'Because I live, *thou* shalt live also.' It is not merely written that God is to be all, but that He is to be all *in* all. *His* universal life is not to destroy the old varieties of being; it is to pulsate through these varieties." Moments on the Mount, p. 182.

nul or bring to nought the purpose of His will, whether regarded as transcendent or immanent.

Of God, therefore, we predicate necessary faithfulness. There is no room for a judgment concerning God's activity other than this, that word and deed, declared purpose and the ultimate results of history, will be commensurate. The conclusion of the course of Providence will be the fulfilment of the divine word relative to the Church and the world.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOD'S PROPERTIES MANIFESTED BY JESUS CHRIST.

§ 140.

The properties of God are manifested by the character in which God Himself is manifested; and in the degree that the organ of manifestation possesses the required fitness for this office. If the organ of revelation be inadequate, or in the degree that the organ is inadequate to the fulfilment of the revealing office, God will be defectively known, and as a consequence defective conceptions of His properties, both metaphysical and ethical, will be formed.

In general there are two concrete orders of divine revelation: the world, and Christianity or the kingdom of God. Each performs this function in two forms. In the cosmos we have to distinguish sub-human kingdoms from man, and in Christianity distinguish the pre-Christian economy from the Christian economy.

1. The study of the physical universe merely in the light of the physical universe, as this may be interpreted by unaided human reason, reveals two vast kingdoms of

existence, the inorganic and the organic, closely linked together and interdependent. In both mighty forces act upon and resist each other, some formative, others destructive. When interrogated in their relation to man, they proclaim two dominant principles seemingly antagonistic, one of order, the other of disorder; one of organization, the other of disorganization; one of good, working toward proportion and harmony, the other of evil, producing discord and violence. Studied along the line of one series of phenomena, nature announces the presence of intrinsic energy, of energy governed by the genius of wisdom and beauty; but studied along the line of a different series of phenomena, nature betrays inadequateness and weakness, disproportion and deformity. Zoroaster,¹ Gautama, Plato,² and other thoughtful students of physical good and physical evil, of the wild confusion revelling in the lower realms of nature, and of the seeming antagonism of all natural

¹ "In opposition to the religion of Brahma, arose (not far from 550 B. C.) Buddhism, which was an attempt at a moral reformation, hostile to castes, but the source of a new hierarchy. Its followers were required to make it their supreme aim to rise above the checkered world of changing appearance, with its pain and vain pleasure. But this end was to be reached, not so much through positive moral and intellectual discipline, as through another process termed 'entrance into Nirvana,' whereby the soul was saved from the torments of transmigration and the individual was brought into unconscious unity with the All. The Persian religion, founded or reformed by Zarathustra (Zoroaster), was opposed to the old Hindu religion whose gods it regarded as evil demons. Over against the kingdom of light or of good was placed, in dualistic opposition, the kingdom of darkness or evil; after a long contest the former was to triumph." Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, I. p. 16.

² Plato affirmed the necessity of evil. "Evils can never perish," he says, "for there must always remain something which is antagonistic to good." *Theætetus*, 176. Hence, although he held that "in God is no unrighteousness at all," he could not rise to the perception of God as the absolute Good, as set forth either in the New or the Old Testament.

elements to the life and well-being of man, discover no *unity* of origin, no unity of purpose, no harmonious action of energies, no prophecy of an ultimate outcome declarative of wisdom and goodness.¹

Of wise omnipotence, a power controlling all natural forces, productive and destructive, with direct and constant reference to a good end; of omnipresence, the presence of a transcendent One, immanent in all departments of the world and in all kinds of forces, yet distinct from all forces and all existences; of righteousness, of a universal principle ordering the processes and disposing the condition of all living beings after a manner answerable to man's moral instincts;—the closest students of the earth and of the heavenly bodies, of minerals, plants and animals, have found no satisfying evidence, nor have their studies, when not inspired by an *a priori* belief in Deity, but supported solely by reflection on external phenomena, suggested a creator of all things, much less suggested the absoluteness and personality of the Creator.

2. Nature, as distinguished from the human race, is an impersonal constitution of heterogeneous forces. Whilst laws reign in every kingdom, and all kingdoms are conjoined and intertwined by a law reigning in and over all, contrary forces working by contrary laws break in at all points, disorganizing organisms and frustrating the seeming intent of order, so that when thought looks for distinct traces of righteous omnipresence or all-wise love, or any other divine property taught by Christianity, reason halts and is bewildered.

¹ 'Revelation is the object of existence, and as the world has by the fall become *this* world, it must accomplish its own revelation, so as fully to display itself in all its glory and in all its worthlessness, in all its effulgence and in all its emptiness.' Martensen's *Dogmatics*, p. 226.

As a matter of historical fact, no pagan philosopher, no founder of an ethnic religion, has ever disclosed these divine qualities by the study of nature. In our day many leaders of science fail to discover by extended and minute researches among strata of rock or the hidden recesses of sub-human life any evidence whatever of divine presence or of a future life. The book of nature is for Christian truth a tablet of hieroglyphics; and amid the *débris* of past ages naturalists have never found the Rosetta stone.

3. The failure of pagan philosophers and of modern scientists to see evident marks of God's unity or omnipresence, or wisdom and goodness, does not contradict either the Psalmist, xix. 1, or Paul, Rom. i. 19. It is the *Psalmist* who, under the guidance of revelation vouchsafed to him in his covenant-fellowship with Jehovah, observes sun, moon and stars as the work of God's hand, to whom the heavens declare divine glory. That glory was not visible to the superstition and sensuality of the Canaanitish tribes. The words of Paul: "The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made," are to be construed in their connection with the words immediately preceding: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it to them." Inasmuch as there is a direct manifestation of God in the hearts of the heathen, they are by the dim partial knowledge arising from within qualified to perceive invisible things through the things that are seen. Yet the apostle limits this knowledge of invisible things to the perception of divine existence and everlasting power.

When sub-human kingdoms are read by the eye of Christian belief in God, they undoubtedly show marks of design; and the connection and interaction of all their de-

partments declare rational order and unity of purpose; but if not illumined and interpreted by the light of the Sun of Righteousness, the knowledge respecting the attributes of God derived from the study of external nature is meagre and uncertain. In presence of universal confusion of natural phenomena, especially the conflict between productive and destructive forces, it is even under some aspects of the problem a difficult task for the Christian theologian effectually to vindicate God's wisdom and goodness.

4. The chief reason why sub-human nature utters indistinct voices on divine attributes is the fact that sub-human nature is an impersonal organization. The impersonal differs so widely in its essential qualities from personality, the chasm separating them is so deep, natural forces and ethical forces are so dissimilar, even so contrary, that the lower order of things, unless studied from the supernatural point of observation, cannot reveal the truth of the higher order. If nature occupied its ideal status, if no alien force had touched the equipoise and teleology of its system of kingdoms, especially if the attitude of man toward nature and the attitude of nature toward man were normal, then the revealing function of nature would correspond to the place nature holds in the economy of creation; the world as God's work would, according to its capacities, declare, like a tree planted by the streams of water, the wisdom and skill of its Author.

Even then, however, the manifestation of divine qualities would be inferior to the manifestation by human personality.

§ 141.

Reflection on *man* introduces inquiry into a new and very different realm, where revelation possesses an organ akin to God. The personal is fit to reveal the Personal; the personal creation fit to reveal the personal Creator.

I. Within the compass of the cosmos man is the most real revelation of God, the normal qualities of humanity being the best exponents of the essential qualities of Deity; and for the reason that man is ethico-rational, a unity not merely of mechanical and organic forces, like the animal, but of spiritual properties, a unity in which subject and object are indissolubly one, in which ethical life is consciously self-determined, and rational life is freely self-known. By virtue of his God-like constitution, he is directly receptive of God's self-annunciation and responsive to God's righteous authority. "God Himself has graven ineffaceable characters on man's deepest nature." Man as man becomes an organ of divine revelation which, in contrast with all organic and inorganic classes of things constituting sub-human kingdoms, is unique. God immanent in human personality by a presence through His Spirit, Himself personal, is the light of the human soul, the light perennially fed by the unfailing sympathies of divine nature with human nature, shining from within into personal history and into all the qualities of ethico-rational life. This continuous contact of personal Spirit with personal spirit imparts to self-consciousness a sense, an inalienable sense, of vital relationship to a supreme Personality, so that man as man, 'fearfully and wonderfully made,' becomes the immediate, positive and most exalted organ of divine revelation.¹

¹ The Rev. Dr. J. Williamson Nevin concludes his great article on

c. Though God's revelation of Himself in man, contrasted with the revealing function of the world of nature, is immediate and exalted, it is nevertheless not adequate to the ethical human needs, nor satisfying to human reason. The confusion of contrary forces dominant in sub-human kingdoms enters into humanity, into man's bodily and psychological organization, into the family and the state, and in these higher realms becomes more intense and more violent. Mechanical contrarieties here become social antagonisms; organic conflicts become personal enmities. Physical evil is converted into moral wrong; devastating storms into cyclones of passion; and the tremors of the earthquake into the convulsive throes of wickedness.

Is Deity one? Is He good? Is He absolute? Is He righteous? Is Deity personal or impersonal? Does His Providence uphold and govern the course of the world? These and cognate questions are irrepressible. They arise spontaneously, and clamor for an answer; yet the light of self-consciousness and the light of nature combined have never been able to guide thought to a rational solution. Whilst observation of the heavens and the earth and self-contemplation persistently declare God's existence, His claims to homage, His power and governmental authority, yet His essential nature, His ideal relation to mankind, to good and to evil, His properties, both metaphysical and ethical, are but faintly discerned.¹ Thoroughly

the "Wonderful Nature of Man" with these words: "No wonders of the simply outward creation, no mysteries of mere nature, can ever signify as much for us, as the world we carry about with us continually in our own being." *Mercersburg Review*, Vol. XI. 1859, p. 317.

"In every sphere of life there is a perception and apprehension of the good, the true, the progressive; but as soon as the hand is put out to grasp the shining benison it vanishes, only leaving on the horizon a lingering prophetic gleam." *The Ancient World and Christianity* by De Pressensé, p. 420.

contradictory conceptions of Deity and of His relations have been developed by systems of philosophy. The light of God shines in the firmament of the soul, but it shines amid clouds and darkness ; and the darkness apprehends it not.¹

To form a conception of the character and degree of divine knowledge which, without the sphere of Messianic revelation, may be evolved from the contact of divine Spirit with human spirit, we need but reflect on mythology and pagan philosophy. The civilization of Greece and Rome, of India and China, exemplify the possible moral and religious outcome. "The pagan life," says Pressensé, "began in a poetic feast, to the tones of inspired lyres, and ended in an orgy."

§ 142.

From external nature and from human personality, separately considered, we pass to an inquiry into cosmos, or the universal whole of things, including man and sub-human kingdoms. Does the universe, including in the idea all its integral parts, furnish a satisfying revelation of God's properties?

1. Though contrary forces are active in all kingdoms, and in all cycles of life, though cross-purposes obtrude themselves wherever with a critical eye we make observations, yet science now joins with theology in affirming the unity of the world. Lower realms are, without exception, connected mechanically and vitally with man, and in this connection with him constitute a whole. He, by common consent, is physically the most perfect outcome of all

¹ John i. 5. "The darkness of which the evangelist speaks is the subjection to sin and falsehood in which humanity lives in consequence of the fact of the fall, narrated in Gen iii." Godet.

processes of development. Cosmic elements, cosmic forces and laws, obtain in him the noblest exponent of their possibilities. The universe as a whole can therefore give us no better insight into divine nature than is afforded by man's ethico-rational constitution. When we study the organism which is the most perfect outcome of the processes of nature, we are studying natural forces and laws at their noblest expression.

Man is the microcosm. Uniting in himself all the faculties and all the attributes of lower organizations, yet distinguished from sub-human kingdoms and superior to them by personality, the question whether the universe as a whole discloses adequate evidence of God's distinguishing qualities resolves itself into the question whether man¹ discloses such satisfying evidence? Does the unity of body and soul? do his physical and ethical properties? does his individual and social condition, as held up to view by the history of past ages, or as seen in the ignorance and folly, the vices and crimes, the wretchedness and

¹ Man "is the world concentrated, consolidated, reduced to its last most comprehensive unity. All its elements and forces come together in the wonderful constitution of his body; which becomes in this way a microcosm, the world, in its inmost essence, reflecting and showing forth continually the sense of what it is in its widest macrocosmic view. . . . But what is all this in comparison with the centralization exhibited in the constitution of the human soul? By this man becomes in the fullest sense a living microcosm, taking up into himself the very being of the great and mighty world around him. In such view the microcosm is more than the macrocosm. . . . Mind is infinitely greater than all that is not mind, enlarge the conception of this as we may. It towers above the whole material creation. It outshines the stars. It is a force more active and powerful than that which bears along comets and planets in their course. The sun itself, in all its majestic splendor, is an object less high and glorious than the soul even of an infant carrying in it the latent power of thought, the undeveloped possibility of reason." Dr. J. W. Nevin, *Mer. Rev.*, Vol. XI. 1859, pp. 224, 228.

misery, the wealth and poverty, the private and public wrongs of our day in pagan lands, furnish satisfying evidence of divine almightiness, of divine wisdom, and divine goodness, or of righteous government? If, excluding as far as possible from the conditions of judgment the light of Christian truth, unprejudiced men study mankind as the noblest member of nature, and study nature in its mechanical and organic relations to mankind, do they discover teleological laws working from the lowest thing onward into the highest realms? Do they find convincing indications of secret mighty movements looking toward the certain actualization of purposes of goodness, the ends of infinite wisdom?

2. Natural science governed in its judgment only by the phenomena of nature says no.¹ Darwin and his conferees, than whom our age has no more patient and intelligent students of plants, animals and man's physical organization, say that nature shows no marks of a supermundane author; that there are no evidences of the designs of wisdom in mineral formations, or in animal structures, or in the human organism. The theory of mechanical evolution, as advocated by non-Christian naturalists, aims to

¹ To a student of Germany who had put some questions on the evidences afforded by natural science to the truths of Christianity Darwin replied as follows:

"SIR: I am very busy, and am an old man, in delicate health, and have not time to answer your questions fully, even assuming that they are capable of being answered at all. Science and Christ have nothing to do with each other, except in as far as the habit of scientific investigation makes a man cautious about accepting any proofs. As far as I am concerned, I do not believe that any revelation has ever been made. With regard to a future life, every one must draw his own conclusions from vague and contradictory probabilities.

Wishing you all well, I remain your obedient servant,

CHARLES DARWIN."

DOWN, *June 5th, 1879.*

account for the wonderful mechanism, not to say organism, of the universe by the operation of forces which exclude the postulate of a Creator, and by consequence exclude the presence of divine properties and all evidence of their immanent action.¹ Whether the recognized scientific judg-

¹In his First Lecture ("Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte") where he discusses the conception of creation and the significance of the doctrine of development as a natural history of creation, Prof. Hæckel says, p. 8: "Die Schöpfung im ersteren Sinne, als die *Entstehung der Materie*, geht uns hier gar nichts an. Dieser Vorgang, wenn er überhaupt jemals stattgefunden hat, ist gänzlich der menschlichen Erkenntniss entzogen, und kann daher auch niemals Gegenstand naturwissenschaftlicher Erforschung sein. Die Naturwissenschaft hält die Materie für ewig und unvergänglich, weil durch die Erfahrung noch niemals das Entstehen oder Vergehen auch nur des kleinsten Theilchens der Materie nachgewiesen worden ist. . . . Eine solche Vorstellung von einer immateriellen Kraft, welche die Materie erst schafft, ist ein Glaubensartikel, welcher mit der menschlichen Wissenschaft gar nichts zu thun hat. *Wo der Glaube anfängt, hört die Wissenschaft auf.*"

In his Preface to the third edition, in replying to the criticism of Prof. Bastian (the Berlin Ethnographer), page xxviii., he taunts him with not knowing that man in general, and Mr. Bastian in particular, began his individual existence with a single cell, that is, a little ball of protoplasm, and then says: "Er begreift nicht einmal den fundamentalen Gegensatz zwischen der teleologischen Dogmatik, die einen weisheitsvollen 'Plan' des Schöpfers nachspürt, und der mechanischen Descendenz-Theorie, welche gerade umgekehrt das 'Weltgesetz' der nothwendigen Causalität an die Stelle des vergeblich gesuchten 'Planes der Schöpfung' setzen will."

On page 17 of the First Lecture, we read: "Was nun jene vielgerühmte *Zweckmässigkeit in der Natur* betrifft, so ist sie überhaupt nur für denjenigen vorhanden, welcher die Erscheinungen im Thier- und Pflanzenleben durchaus oberflächlich betrachtet." . . . "Jeder aber, der tiefer in die Organisation und Lebensweise der verschiedenen Thiere und Pflanzen eindringt, der sich mit der Wechselwirkung der Lebenserscheinungen und der so genannten 'Oekonomie der Natur' vertrauter macht, kommt nothwendig zu der Anschauung, dass diese Zweckmässigkeit nicht existirt, so wenig als etwa die vielgerühmte Allgüte des Schöpfers."

Page 19: "Es fällt keinem Physiker oder Chemiker, keinem Mineralogen oder Astronomen mehr ein, in den Erscheinungen, welche ihm

ment that discerns no divine presence, no divine wisdom, no divine goodness, in the evolution and history of the world be really scientific and logical or not, the fact that the theory of mechanical evolution is held by thoughtful men, and that non-Christian scientists declare that marks of divine wisdom or goodness are not to be found in the heavens or on earth, in sub-human kingdoms or in the organization of man, proves that the cosmos, studied purely in the light of the cosmos, furnishes to the 'natural mind' at most but obscure and imperfect manifestations of God. Men like Paley, Janet, Pressensé, Lotze and others who with learning, ability and conclusiveness maintain that laws of design reign everywhere throughout nature, notwithstanding the logical difficulties suggested by the contrarieties and failures which meet the eye in all directions, pursue their inquiries, not exclusively by interrogating nature as nature, but from the standpoint of theism, a theism which is Christian rather than pagan. The work of Janet on 'Final Causes' evinces by its tone and structure that the acumen and depth of the author's reasonings are due to Christian postulates which like steady lights illumine his tortuous pathway, beget the divine animus of his method, and give direction to his aim.

Of the insufficiency of nature and man to disclose divine

auf seinem wissenschaftlichen Gebiete fortwährend vor Augen kommen, die Wirksamkeit eines Zweckmässig thätigen Schöpfers zu erblicken oder aufzusuchen."—*i. e.*, such phenomena are regarded as the necessary and never varying effects of purely physical and chemical forces.

On pages 633 *seq.* he asserts that the most highly developed organs, like the eye, so perfect that no mechanic even the most skilful, could imitate them, can all be accounted for by a chain of gradually developed organs, beginning, for example, with a mere pigment cell, as the first rudiment of the eye. But the passage is too long to quote entire.
—J. S. S.

truth we have a most forcible illustration in Gautama (Buddha) and in the immense multitude of his followers, numbering, it is estimated, three or four hundred millions of souls. So little of divine goodness and divine righteousness was evident from the phenomena of nature and the phenomena of human life to this amiable searcher after wisdom that he laid it down as the principal tenet of his religion that personal real existence is the prime evil. It is the chief dictate of wisdom to get rid of individuality and personality. The final aim of these hundreds of millions of Buddhists, in as far as they remain faithful to the tenets of the founder of their religion, is Nirvâna;¹ and of Nirvâna the most definite statement which a Christian can make is that it is the negation of actual human existence. The goal of mankind is an absorption of individuals into the ocean of being. The negation which is the final result of religious striving supersedes and destroys the realities of human nature, all inborn impulses, faculties and functions of the soul, as well as all bodily appetites and bodily conditions.

¹The highest attainable state in this life "leads to Nirvâna, that is, to the extinction of all troubles in heart or mind, consequently the extinction of being. It is the indispensable condition of that extinction, and is really indistinguishable from it, for its essence consists in proving for oneself that nothing exists. To recognize that there is nothing is to sound the depths of things, to enter into annihilation. 'The wise man finishes by extinguishing himself, like the flame of a lamp.'" The *Ancient World and Christianity*, Dr. de Pressensé, p. 234. Max Müller says: "Buddha denies the existence not only of a Creator, but of any Absolute Being. There is no reality anywhere, neither in the past nor in the future. True wisdom consists in perceiving the nothingness of all things and in a desire to become nothing, to be blown out, to enter into Nirvâna. Emancipation is obtained by total extinction, not by absorption in Brahman, or by a recovery of the soul's true estate. If to be is misery, not to be must be felicity, and this felicity is the highest reward which Buddha promised his disciples." *Chips from a German Workshop*, I. p. 227 Cf. pp. 243, 249.

Should it be objected that Buddhism is a *natural* religion, a religion developed in the midst of the darkness of paganism, the objection, instead of weakening the force of the proposition that nature and the human soul are feeble and inadequate organs for the manifestation of divine properties, supports this proposition. It is in pagan lands, in pagan religions, where the interpretations of the cosmos by Christianity are entirely unknown, that we may see how faint and uncertain are the radiations of divine light from the present unideal order of the natural world; and by contrast may see how much of the truth of natural theology, supposed to be developed purely from the study of nature, is either unwittingly transferred to nature from the knowledge of God obtained by Christian revelation, or is discerned only by the penetrating eye of Christian faith.

§ 143.

Passing from the study of the cosmos embracing the outer world and man, to the elevated plateau of Messianic revelation, we come into a region qualitatively different as to its genius and divine significance. In the pre-Christian period God comes to view as Jehovah, the author of the covenant with Abraham, a new communion between Himself and an elect man, an elect family, an elect nation. The history of this new communion is the history of a 'peculiar people,' in which, as reflected by their sacred books, we have a purer, more consistent, more satisfying manifestation of God's being and properties.

1. If we survey the history of the people of God from Seth to Noah, and from Noah through the lineage of Shem to Abraham, as the product of faith in God's advent of grace announced by the primeval promise ;¹ and survey the

¹ Heb. xi.

entire history of the Israelites, the manifold development of the unique covenant-fellowship of Jehovah with the chosen nation from the call of Abraham to the birth of Jesus, we come into contact with an extraordinary institution which by its moral and spiritual character is fitted to be an organ of divine revelation. This fitness differs in degree from both the outer world and man, but differs especially in kind. The new communion is not a fellowship between God and mankind universally, but a unique fellowship between God and a chosen man, the progenitor of a separated nation, which by divine providence is trained, developed, upheld, enlarged, morally and spiritually educated, and disciplined by a righteous discipline during many centuries.

The nation becomes the consecrated subject of a divine presence and a divine government, in striking contrast with divine presence in all other nations.

The Old Testament books reflect the faith, the perceptions and ideas of representative men; and the representative men of the chosen people are the exponents of the distinctive genius of the national life and the national history. The genius of this consecrated national life, as it passes through successive epochs and stages of development, is the progressive manifestation of a supernatural order of divine Presence, a Presence which to faithful sons and receptive learners, as from time to time begotten by it they grew up to be the true exponents of the national life, revealed Jehovah, His unity, His personality and transcendence, His righteousness, His supreme power, His retributive justice, His unfailing sympathy with human needs, His wise government both of His own people and of all nations, and especially revealed the Messianic teleology of His people, the teleology of His

presence in their history, and of the manifold extraordinary events brought to pass under His righteous government.¹

2. Here also, as among other nations, good forces and evil forces come into conflict; the law of right is violated by wrong; consecrated human history becomes the theatre where falsehood contends with truth, vice with virtue, premature death with heroism; yet the varied phenomena of this divine-human process of development do not suggest the doubt whether Jehovah is good, and merciful, and wise. Much less is it a matter of doubt whether God is a being different from natural laws and natural powers. On all questions respecting God's personal existence, His unity, and the attributes of almightiness, wisdom and righteousness, a light shines from the national life, from national institutions, civil and religious, from every national convulsion, from the consciousness of the people as a body, and the literature of representative men, so clear, so steady,

¹ According to Dr. Riehm, late Professor of Theology at Halle, the peculiar nature of the religion of the Old Testament consists in the faith that the One purely spiritual, personal and morally perfect God, who is infinitely exalted above the world which on Him is absolutely dependent, yet is revealing Himself in it, has by a series of revelations and deeds among His chosen people, founded a kingdom in which He is manifesting to His people the entire riches of His grace, and His will is to be the only and all-controlling law. He emphasizes *three* characteristic elements which essentially distinguish the religion of the Old Testament from all the religions of antiquity: 1, A peculiar monotheism; the one God, being supermundane, is most sharply distinguished from the world, whilst the world is absolutely dependent on His will: 2, In contradistinction from all other ancient religions, the principal element in the idea of God is His *moral perfection*; and this consciousness determines a moral view of human life and the order of the world: 3, Only in this religion is the Most High, the holy and just One, known to be the God of grace, who becomes to all who seek Him a Redeemer and Saviour, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. *Alttestamentliche Theologie* von D. Eduard Riehm, § 4.

growing in brightness like the sun ascending the heavens, that with this light the apprehension of God's properties gained from the study of the outer world and from the study of humanity can scarcely be compared.

Valuable and elevating as are divine manifestations in nature and in the human soul, yet for thoughtful men these manifestations in every age suggest problems respecting God's relation to the world which, as we have seen, remain unsolved. But for an earnest inquirer who occupies the right moral attitude relatively to the Messianic revelation of the pre-Christian period, the careful study of the chosen people, beginning with Abraham and following successive generations coming and going through two thousand years, will answer some fundamental questions concerning the unity, power, wisdom, righteousness and absoluteness of God; questions which perplexed the philosophers of Greece, and now turn to confusion the hypotheses of thinkers who seek from the study of man as man, and from the study of material nature, to gain a satisfying apprehension of God's being and properties.

3. These results from the study of the national history of the Abrahamic people as it confronts us in the Scriptures of the Old Testament do not depend on the final outcome of biblical criticism. The broad line of difference between this singular nation and all other nations, addresses the eye, no matter when or by whom these extraordinary books were written, no matter how numerous or how great the modifications which original compositions have undergone under the hands of editors. *There are the books.* There is the self-consistent history of a people unlike the religious history of all other peoples. There may be seen a spiritual growth, a life-movement distinctly traceable, extending through a long series of ages, taking in

numberless persons and characters, manifold series of events, terrific social upheavals, a succession of political, civil and religious institutions, violent antagonisms of hostile nations, concrete interactions with local and geographical surroundings, all epochs animated by one ancient principle, one ultimate purpose; and all working together toward the accomplishment of that purpose—a purpose which at length, in a way that no human genius did foresee, is brought to pass, and which constitutes a consummation of untold significance for that ‘peculiar people’ and for the whole world. Such a history, and such an issue, does not address the eye of human reason anywhere else. The fact stands independently of all theories by which the origin and structure of the record may be interpreted.

Critics who arbitrarily assume that there never were objective spiritual realities answering to the life-like portraiture drawn by a long succession of spiritual artists magnify, instead of minifying, the extraordinariness of these productions. For the portraiture is not destroyed by hostile criticism. The picture is before us in those wonderful Scriptures, whether the artists witnessed a corresponding real series of divine-human events, addressing them from without, or their work be supposed to be purely the creation of inventive religious genius. If unbelief suggests and maintains the latter alternative, the extraordinary picture is still more extraordinary, more mysterious, than if the supernatural history be acknowledged to be objectively real. For then the origin, structure, moral power, and outcome of this literature would form a much stronger and more thorough contrast with the sacred literature of other nations, and the possibility of such production would be more unaccountable, nay, more marvel-

lous, than the pre-supposition which underlies the belief of the Hebrews and of the Christian Church.¹ The phenomenon would be incapable of interpretation on the basis of human experience, or human history, or on any rational or religious grounds ; yet the phenomenon itself would remain what it is, a declaration of God and a sublime representation of His realized attributes.

It will remain unchangeably true that the portraiture, whether real or imaginative, represents conceptions of God, of His relations to nature and to His people, of His metaphysical attributes and moral character, on a plane of purity, dignity and grandeur incomparably superior to opinions suggested by the manifestation of the Divine in pagan life and pagan history, or by the organic processes and inorganic forces of the natural world.

4. It cannot, however, be affirmed that the *perfect* ideal of the invisible God addresses spiritual perception from the Abrahamic covenant and the extraordinary history of the Abrahamic nation as reflected from the mirror of the Old Testament books. Noble and distinctive as is that ideal, it fails short of the whole truth as disclosed by the person and mediatorial work of the Son of Man.²

¹ What Rousseau said of the gospel would be applicable to the books of the Old Testament: "The gospel exhibits characteristics of truth, so great, so striking, and so perfectly inimitable, that its inventor would be more marvellous than its hero."

² At no stage of the history of the old covenant does a perfect ideal come to view. No patriarch, neither Moses, nor David, nor Samuel, nor Isaiah is a faultless realization of the ethico-religious truth which either of them taught, or of the divine mission which either was called to fulfil.

§ 144.

The final revelation of God is the constitution and ideal life of Jesus Christ ; a revelation which addresses us from His twofold history : the life of humiliation on earth, and the life of exaltation in heaven.

The final manifestation of *God* involves the final manifestation of God's *qualities*. His qualities are neither more nor less than the distinctions predicable of the fulness of His Being. In so far as we rightly know the incarnate Son, we rightly know divine nature ; and in so far as we know divine nature, we may be able to form a truthful conception of divine properties.

1. Objectively, the manifestation of God's qualities by the Person of the incarnate Son in the two periods of His mediatorship is *perfect*. Metaphysical qualities and ethical qualities appear under forms that fully answer to divine properties as they are in themselves. No possibility of divine life or purpose is hidden. In the infinitude of divine being there is no element of absolute truth that has not been brought to light by the incarnate Son. This statement embraces His life of humiliation and His life of exaltation. The period on earth is partial, typical and prophetic : the period in heaven is complemental, anti-typical and ultimate. Taken in their vital connection, the two periods of incarnate history constitute the revelation of the wholeness of divine Truth.

The manifestation in the subjects of the kingdom is *imperfect* ; for our knowledge of God's qualities, though in the glorified Christ God's qualities are perfectly declared, is limited by the militant state of the Church and by the consequent inadequate capacities of her membership. In this respect theological knowledge corresponds to the first

period of our Lord's personal history. Whilst living in the flesh the manifestation of divine attributes was new, true, unique, even glorious ; but not final nor absolute ; and for the reason that Jesus was Himself in the process of fulfilling His mediatorship, looking forward to the laying down of His life, to His resurrection, and to His glorification as His ultimate goal. The Church militant on earth is following the Mediator according to the same law of growth ; her capacities of insight and judgment correspond to her state of present incomplete development.

Nevertheless, the knowledge of divine attributes, when obtained by the believing contemplation of God's being as manifested by the personal history of our Lord on earth and in Heaven, is true knowledge ; and when contrasted with the knowledge gained from the light of the cosmos, it is to be regarded as the only true knowledge, transcending in trustworthiness the conceptions of God suggested by the discoveries of natural science or the metaphysical speculations of philosophy, or even by the extraordinary history of the elect nation.

2. God's revelation of Himself by Jesus Christ brings into the field of human vision the wholeness of the Godhead, including both His fundamental and derivative properties. That God is the one absolute Spirit ; that absolute Spirit lives His triune life of love in light ; and accordingly that self-existent triune being is the only true and eternal God ; this fundamental truth confronts the faith of men in the person and mediatorship of the incarnate Son.

Moreover, in Him, that is, in the reciprocal communion between Christ glorified and His believing people, so far as believers are intellectually and ethically qualified,¹ it

¹ "It is a characteristic of the gospel," says Wilberforce, "to give a higher employment to every faculty of the understanding, and a nobler object to every affection of the heart." *The Incarnation*, p. 10.

becomes possible through the study of Scripture, to apprehend and grasp the import of absolute Spirit in distinction from nature and man.

3. Since God and man are one personality in Jesus of Nazareth, it is obvious that there is no dualistic antagonism between spirit and matter, between God and the world. Finite creation, completed in humanity, is in sympathy with absolute Spirit ; when creation occupies its normal position it is active in harmony with Spirit, and calls for constant intercommunion. The antithesis between Spirit and matter, between God and the disorganized world, anticipates an epoch in process of the ages when the original idea immanent in the constitution and history of the world will be completed and fulfilled by an act of glorification ; for the humanity of Jesus is organically one with the teleology of the cosmos.

4. In the incarnate Son it becomes possible to learn in what sense absolute Spirit is life, light, love, or what is the essence of these fundamental predicates. True knowledge we may get by studying His divine-human history, His mediatorial work, and His ethico-religious victories achieved over the kingdom of darkness.

Divine life as generically differing from, yet in affinity with human life we may see in the phenomena of Jesus' growth, of His self-determined humiliation, of His resurrection and ascension. The tripartite human organism is an ultimate fact in the domain of creation ; we know its manifold phenomena ; we distinguish its type from the type of the animal ; and we may trace its complex laws. If we ask after its origin, we refer human life to divine authorship ; God by creation and providence conditions the human race, its constitution and its continuity. Many questions on man may be put which neither science, nor phi-

losophy, nor the spiritual insight of religious genius has been able to answer.

But when human life is assumed into divine life, when infinite being and finite being become one ethico-spiritual constitution, we are addressed by a historical fact of a new order which sheds light on man and light on God. Divine-human personality is ultimate. Christian reason cannot refer the mystery to a truth of broader compass or a truth better known. By believing contemplation of this unique fact we develop a twofold better knowledge: a profounder insight into the intrinsic dignity and wonderful capabilities of human nature,¹ and the most rational insight into divine being and divine properties, into the close kinship of God with man, so that we may read God's nature reflected in ideal human nature, and God's character in ideal human character.

As all events in the history of the incarnate Son are divine-human events, it may be seen, for example, that there is no metaphysical nor ethical contradiction between God as the living God and the fact of death on the cross. Death on the cross is an epoch in the process of the righteous *life* of the Mediator, an epoch which He represents (in the Gospel of John) as a going to the Father.

The organic connection of the incarnate Son with mankind, though sinful, and with the lower kingdoms of nature, though disorganized, shows us sympathy between the life

¹Says Dr. Matheson: "Thou art the least happy of all creatures. Wherefore is it thus with thee? Wherefore art thou less happy than the beast of the field? Is it because thou hast fewer resources? Nay, it is because thy resources are greater, because they are too great for the world that environs thee. Thou hast capacities for boundless flight, and thou art chained within a limited area; thou art made for God, and thou art narrowed to the dust. It is thy greatness makes thee unhappy." *Moments on the Mount*, p. 152.

of self-existent Spirit and the normal life of created spirit, and a measure of correspondence between the supernal realm and the order of mundane existence. It may also be seen that what is necessary that men may have a genuine *human* existence, is fellowship with the righteous and holy life of God. Men live an ideal human life when they live the divine life; and ideal human life as realized in Jesus, brings to view eternal divine life. The result is reciprocal; for the incarnation, when viewed as the assumption of humanity into God, declares the divine aptitudes of man; when viewed as the infleshment or *Menschwerdung* of Deity, it declares the human aptitudes of God.¹

The righteous life of God is the fountain whence is constantly flowing the river that through all ages is feeding the tree of human life.²

5. As interpreted by meditation on the incarnate Son, God as *light* is the effulgence of righteous and holy life.

Jesus was Truth,³ the truth of divine nature embodied in the truth of human nature. As man He fulfilled ideal manhood. In His history the design of creation became final reality. As such reality, in which the ideal and the actual were one, Jesus declares divine truth. Hence His

¹ Wilberforce approaches this truth when he says: "This is the very meeting place of heaven and earth, the union of glory and humiliation; herein the two worlds of the infinite and the finite touch upon one another; by this we see what God can bestow, and of what man is susceptible." Incarnation, p. 197. But does Wilberforce grasp the whole truth? Is he not hampered by a rigid, non-ethical conception of divine immutability? God does not only touch man and bestow glory. There is an interaction after a divine manner as truly as after a human manner between divine nature and human nature, in virtue of which God's *life* is manifested in Man's life. "For as the body and soul is one man, so God and man is one Christ."

² Ps. i. 3.

³ John xiv. 6; viii. 19.

person and history were the 'light of the world.' Jesus Christ is light: He knows Himself in union with God, He knows God in union with Himself, inasmuch as He *is* the truth, divine-human truth. In Himself He fulfils the teleology of nature; He fulfils the original intention and all the laws of normal humanity; and He perfects the ideal ethico-spiritual fellowship between man and God.¹

Therefore He, 'the light of the world,' is the organ of divine light. If we read the nature of Deity in the personal history and the perfectly righteous character of the Son of Man, we see that God as light pre-supposes absolute goodness, purity, holiness; its essence being positively ethical. Light pre-supposes the righteousness of divine life: righteousness in relation to Himself, to His triune existence, and righteousness relatively to the world. Living the life of absolute truth, God is self-luminous; He is to angels and men the source and condition of truth and knowledge.

If Jesus were not truth, if not the idea and teleology of man perfectly realized, He would not be light; He would not illumine all realms of existence. So if God were not truth, if He were not the triune organism living in the righteous communion of love; if He did not fulfil His own will; if "His working" were not unchangeably in perfect harmony with "His being"; if He were not the satisfying end of His own existence; He would not be light.

6. But no conception of God as life or as light can be final unless it embraces another principle.

The personal history of the incarnate Son was the life

¹ Hippolytus says: God begetting the Word "as Light of Light, He set Him forth to the world as its Lord, (and) His own mind; and whereas He was visible formerly to Himself alone, and invisible to the world which is made, He makes Him visible in order that the world might see Him in His manifestation, and be capable of being saved." Against the Heresy of One Noetus, 10.

of *self-sacrifice* for the salvation and exaltation of *enemies*. The light of the world which He affirms Himself to be is the light shining forth from His *righteous love*. To get insight into the genius of love, of love to God and love to man, we have to contemplate the threefold state and history of His person: the pre-mundane period, His mundane or incarnate humiliation, and His post-mundane or transcendent reign as perfected Mediator in heaven, head over all things unto the Church. This threefold history¹ reveals the truth and divineness of love, as distinguished from all imperfect, or one-sided, or false manifestations of sympathy, of affection, of heroic devotion by individuals, by families or by nations.

The faultless *realization* of this ethical principle, unimagined by mythology, never postulated by philosophy, nor discovered by unchristological speculation on divine things, to name which the New Testament writers appropriate from the Septuagint a new word, (derived from the Hebrew tongue) *ἀγάπη*, is a revelation concrete and final of God's heart; it stands as the fundamental premise of thought on Love and the criterion of sound theological judgment. This criterion neither philosophy nor theology can transcend. God so loved the *world* as to give His only begotten Son. God as love is none other than the love realized and displayed by His Son incarnate. Love accounts for His Mediatorship. Love interprets His divine-human life. Love distinguishes ethical light. "He who fixed the heavens like a vault is fastened to the cross by the Jews. He who raises the dead is wrapped in linen and laid in a sepulchre. All things hath He finished for us, who for our sakes was made as we are."² In the degree that we rightly apprehend this self-illuminating life of the

¹ Phil. ii. 5-11.

² Hippolytus against one Noetus, 18.

Son of Man we may gain correct insight into the essence of God as love. No God-conception can be valid that contravenes the sympathy with human needs and the changeless devotion to the kingdom of love illustrated by the self-denial and self-sacrifice of the incarnate Son.

The Old Testament announces the obligation of love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,"¹ and "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."² But this twofold command was only a *command*—an imperative proposition perpetuated in speech by oral tradition or by writing, not perfectly realized by a man in all the epochs and periods and events of his personal history. Neither Moses nor Aaron, neither Samuel nor David, neither Isaiah nor John the Baptist, exemplify the command in its ideal force. The principle wrought indeed as a new energy among the Hebrews, but its full divine force was hidden under the letter rather than revealed by an actual human life in the spirit. Jesus interprets the infinite depths and the infinite compass of this 'old commandment' by His extraordinary history; He lays down His life of Himself that His *enemies* may have life.³

By doing the Truth which He is we come into sympathy immediately, not with the letter of the 'categorical imperative,' but with the love which Jesus lived; then our eyes open to see the hidden significance of the 'old commandment.'

¹ Deut. vi. 5.

² Lev. xix. 18.

³ "The love of the Jew for the Jew arose from the fact that Jehovah was the God of both and had chosen them both in Abraham. Jesus brought into the world and testified to His own a love specifically different from any love which had appeared until then, that which attaches itself to the human personality in order to save it. From this new hearth there springs forth the flame of an affection essentially different from any that the world knew under this name before." Godet on John xiii. 34.

§ 145.

Being the impersonation of divine life, divine light, divine love, Jesus, the incarnate Son, is the true revelation of God's derivative properties. His metaphysical and ethical perfections, as nowhere else displayed, shine forth in the Mediator.

1. The eternity of God we may learn to think of rightly by contemplating the life of Jesus in time. His development and growth declare sympathy and correspondence between the eternal and the temporal. The temporal is not wanting in requisite susceptibility for the eternal. The eternal does not by its infinitude exclude the temporal. Eternity and time, the concrete eternal and the concrete temporal, solicit each other. Though we have to deny that time-distinctions, past, present and future, are distinctions predicable of divine existence, yet we have to affirm that the nature of God, who in His self-related activities has no past, nor future, is in positive harmony with human nature, though man's existence is conditioned by time-processes and time-relations. As man himself is really objective to God, also for God has the temporal mode of man's existence objective reality.¹

¹ The teaching of the older theologies on God's relation to the time-world, as Dorner, Martensen and others maintain, demands revision. To this teaching, Ebrard squarely commits himself: "Indessen soll der ganze Gegensatz von *Gegenwart* und *Vergangenheit* hiemit nicht etwa als ein für Gott bestehender dargestellt werden; sondern durch den Satz, dasz Gott das, was uns Menschen als vergangen erscheint, ebenso wie das, was uns als zukünftig erscheint, weisz und schaut, soll vielmehr ausgedrückt werden, dasz für Gott der ganze Gegensatz von *Vergangenheit* und *Zukunft* nicht existirt." *Christliche Dogmatik*, § 186. Then it must follow that the life of the incarnate Son on earth, the historical difference between His birth, His ministry, His death and resurrection is for God unreal; and if for God unreal, His history must be in its relation to us an *illusion*.

If, dismissing unchristological notions of the eternal, we contemplate the reciprocal fitness of the eternal for the temporal, of the temporal for the eternal, we may develop a conception of eternity that, compared with the conceptions of natural science or of non-christian metaphysics, is new; and if we allow this new conception to have legitimate force in theological thought, many of the supposed logical difficulties that embarrass rational reflection on God as eternal relatively to man as temporal, and on the incarnation, will disappear.

2. The same principle of reasoning is applicable to immutability. From the beginning to the end of His life in the flesh, Jesus was true to His mediatorial mission. No amount of opposition, no fierceness of persecution, no agony of suffering, no feeling of loneliness, no malignant onset from the kingdom of darkness could for an instant divert Him from His purpose. Amid hunger and thirst, through temptation, shame and death, He moved steadily onward toward the goal of the new creation. He was not, like a rock, insusceptible to bodily pains or mental agonies; nor mechanically identical with Himself, like the motion of a planet from year to year circling in its orbit; nor was He stern, arbitrary, rigid, like fate, in the pursuit of His purpose. Yet He was ever the same personality, ever in perfect harmony with Himself, whether feeding the multitudes or stilling the waves, whether weeping with Mary or commanding Lazarus to come forth, whether riding in triumph into Jerusalem or expiring upon the cross.

The immutability of His righteous life of love mirrors the immutability of God. The transition from the glory of the Father into the world by conception and birth, His physical growth and ethico-religious development, His self-humiliation and obedience unto death, His crucifixion and

resurrection, instead of being incompatible with God's immutable nature, express an idea of immutability wholly different in kind from the physical or metaphysical notions of unchristian philosophy. Metaphysical objections to the incarnation, on the ground of supposed contradiction between the immutable infinite and the transitory finite are to be dismissed as proceeding from unwarranted hypotheses. The actual history of the incarnate Son being the concrete manifestation of God's nature, this history sets before us divine immutability under a character that negates the *a priori* notions of neo-platonism, and supersedes the assumptions of modern rationalistic speculation.

3. Like immutability and eternity, divine knowledge, divine wisdom and power are by the personal history of our Lord manifested under original forms. Omnipotence is not power, putting down one and setting up another according to an arbitrary exercise of sovereign will. True knowledge as to its contents is determined by its *object*. The contents of God's knowledge of men answer to what men are and what they actually do. True wisdom is not wanting in sympathy with the necessities and needs of the good and the bad. Its ends are not appointed mechanically, nor pursued by methods external to mankind and the natural world.

In performing wonderful deeds Jesus exercised His power as occasions arose, in proportion to the spiritual capacities of His disciples and answerable to the exigencies of the people. The process of humiliation from the 'form of God' to the depths of hades, the victory achieved over the 'last enemy,' and the process of exaltation 'far above all heavens' declare a might of energy, a penetration and compass of knowledge, a wisdom of profound and ilimitable purpose, a unique method of achievement that

transcends the judgment, imagination and even the dreams of genius, and in kind differs from all revelations of wisdom, knowledge and power set forth by the laws and reciprocal adaptations discoverable in the sub-human kingdoms of the universe.¹ *Man*, the ethico-spiritual world, has capacities for a fitting display of divine qualities which must be denied of the material world; and when the ethico-spiritual addresses us under its ideal character in the service of redemption, these capacities acquire a degree of susceptibility and fitness which is perfect. Jesus of Nazareth is the only man, and His personal life is the only history that reveals superhuman power and superhuman knowledge under a character that is truly human yet at the same time really transcendent.

4. As regards the revelation of holiness, righteousness and justice, the same law is to be recognized. The character under which these divine predicates are manifested by the personal history of our Lord is in striking contrast with pagan notions, with the doctrines of philosophy, and even in a measure with the tenor of teaching in the Old Testament.

Pagan holiness is austere, exclusive and repellant; so also the holiness of the ascetic of the early Christian Church. It lacks genuine sympathy with the economy of human life, especially with marriage, parental affection, filial devotion and the ordinary callings of civilized society.² A holy man of this order may be proud, and even

¹ Phil. ii. 5-11; Eph. iii. 13-21.

² Says Dr. Schaff: Asceticism "substitutes an abnormal, self-appointed virtue and piety for the normal forms prescribed by the Creator; and not rarely looks down upon the divinely-ordained standard with spiritual pride." *History of the Christian Church*, vol. ii. § 104. Touching the pagan origin of the false asceticism of the Christian Church compare Hippolytus, *Refutation of all Heresies*, ch. I.

cruel. He abuses his own body by penal discipline and self-castigation ; and may be indifferent to the bodily needs of his fellow-men.

Holiness and righteousness, as reflected by the events recorded in the Old Testament, are predominantly negative. God's holiness is chiefly His abhorrence of wickedness and His separation from the wicked. The holiness of His people is total separation from the superstitions and impurities of paganism. Contact with heathen rites by association in worship, or with the heathen by eating and drinking with them is contaminating.

Righteousness is the maintenance of divine authority against transgressors. Justice comes to view principally in the judgments visited by Jehovah upon His unfaithful people, and upon pagan nations for their wickedness.

The incarnate Mediator conserves the negative aspect of divine holiness and divine righteousness, and even declares it prophetically in forms more appalling.¹ But with the negative aspect comes to view, with original prominence, the positive aspect. In the personal history of Jesus holiness is not only divorce from sinfulness, but also unconditional consecration to His Father in heaven,—consecration animated and filled with love to God and love to man. Spotless holiness is in harmony with filial subjection to Joseph and Mary for thirty years, consistent with the common vocation of a carpenter, consistent with His presence at a great feast made by Levi, the publican, consistent with constant intercourse with publicans and sinners. The touch of the unholy woman who bathed His feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head did not defile Him.¹ Mingling day by day with all grades

¹ Matt. ch. 23.

¹ Says Dr. Matheson: "Who ever sought fellowship like *Him*—the

of the poor, the outcast, the down-trodden and the vile ; sympathizing with their wants and their miseries, His moral purity amidst these associations, filled with these sympathies, was immaculate ; the fulfilment of His Father's will by word and deed was both faultless and in spiritual excellence transcendent.

The righteousness of Jesus consisted in firmly choosing the right and unswervingly doing the right according to His intuitive vision of the absolute standard of right in God. He did the right in relation to God, impelled by divine love. He did the right in relation to man, impelled by human love. And in His love, as He manifested it toward His followers and His enemies, we behold the righteousness of God's love.

5. But divine love and human love were not merely sentiment, not sympathy divorced from moral judgment. Holy love was retributive. The element of reward for doing the truth, the element of penalty for despising the truth, entered into His conduct and into His words. Call to mind the commendation of Simon when he made his memorable confession ;¹ of the poor widow who cast into the treasury all her living ;² and of the woman who poured exceeding precious ointment upon His head, as He sat at meat.³ The fig-tree whereon He found nothing but leaves Jesus cursed, and the fig-tree withered away from

light and life of men ? To whom did He not outpour Himself ? What sphere of human history did He not strive to make His own ? Pharisee and publican, Jew and Gentile, rich and destitute, learned and ignorant—He met them all. He touched those spheres of worldliness which the world itself could not touch without increased defilement. . . . I long to be able like thee to touch impurity without stain, to shine in darkness without receiving its shadow." Moments on the Mount, p. 138.

¹ Matt. xvi. 15-17.

² Luke xxi. 2 ; Mark xii. 42.

³ Matt. xxvi. 7-13.

the roots¹—an event symbolical of the curse that was about to fall upon the Jews for the persistent sin of unbelief. His righteousness approves the right; His righteousness passes judgment on the wrong. In Scribes and Pharisees He condemns the external form of morality and of religious service divorced from the devotion of the heart; He commends the faith of the Syro-phœnician woman, though she did not observe the ceremonies of the law of Moses.² Coming to seek and to save the lost, He pronounces terrible denunciations upon the cities that had witnessed His mighty works, but put contempt on His words and on Himself.

Jesus Christ in His life and Mediatorship, in His words and deeds, mirrors God's perfect holiness as in living sympathy with the spiritual needs of the unholy and vicious; mirrors God's unchangeable righteousness as active in the spiritual service of the unrighteous; mirrors His justice as rewarding obedience³ and punishing disobedience, yet holding the disobedient subject to the discipline of suffering, and saving the guilty, when repentant, from the penalties of guilt. At every turn the personal history of Jesus exhibits a new phase of ethical truth, of truth not conceived, nor taught, nor exemplified by any other man or in any other sphere of human life.

6. All physical and ethical qualities of God are efful-

¹ Matt. xxi. 18, 19; Mark xi. 11-14.

² Mark vii. 24-30; Matt. xv. 28.

³ The blessedness consequent upon righteousness is the *essential* manifestation of divine justice. The punishments of disobedience, though real and certain, are not a part of the normal order of the world, and are therefore, as regards their revealing force, of inferior significance. Penalties exhibit directly the operation of falsehood, indirectly the persistence and might of truth, or rather the reaction of the positive moral order of the world against the violence done the truth by sin.

gent in Christ; yet some are more apparent, more easily discernible, than others. Mercy and faithfulness address us as it were from the surface of His history. The words spoken by Him of Himself: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister,"¹ He illustrated by feeding famishing multitudes, by healing their sicknesses, and raising the dead. He wept with Mary and Martha in their sorrow; His compassion with the widow of Nain was converted into a rejoicing with her in her joy. His faithfulness is seen in the firmness and persistence with which, in face of the opposition from Gentiles and Jews, from rulers and people, He fulfilled the will of His Father, drinking without a murmur the bitter cup of suffering to the end of His life.

Jesus of Nazareth in His life, by the things He did and the words He spake, was, from His birth to the hour of His death and onward to the day of His ascension, not to speak now of His mediatorial reign in heaven, a revelation of the qualities of God, a concrete manifestation transcending in kind and in degree all the thoughts and all the imaginings of 'the natural man.' When with the eye of faith we read Jesus Christ we read God; and as in Jesus God may be read He is not read in nature, nor discovered by science, nor postulated by philosophy. It is faith working through love, not natural judgment, nor scientific culture, which sees in the personal history of Jesus Christ the truth of God.

¹ Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.

§146.

The fundamental principle of divine knowledge may at this point require renewed emphasis.

Scholars may be very familiar with the letter of the gospels, and critically study the books of the New Testament. They may possess large learning respecting the human origin, literary structure and external history of the books. They may have nice critical perception, much skill in logical reasoning, and possess thorough acquaintance with modes of thought prevalent among Jews and Greeks when these books were written. Such scholarship and critical skill may be of immense value in the service of theological science and of practical religion. But literary criticism and much learning do not open the door to the pavilion of Christian truth. The 'treasures of wisdom and knowledge' are hidden from intellectual inquiry, unless intellect be joined in faithful wedlock to a confiding and obedient will. Says our Lord, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, He it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him."¹ The revelation of the attributes of God made by the incarnate Son, he only may know to whom the incarnate Son manifests Himself. To whom the Son manifests Himself, to him God may be

¹ John xiv. 21. "This altogether extraordinary term *ἐμφανίζειν* refers to the inward manifestation of the Messiah." Godet. Augustine says: "This has been the present aim of His love, that we may believe, and keep hold of the commandment of faith; but then His love will have this for its object, that we may see, and get that very sight as the reward of our faith: for we also love now by believing in that which we shall see hereafter; but then shall we love in sight of that which now we believe." Tractate 65, 5.

known, known in proportion to his positive spiritual fitness of soul for ethical sympathy with and for living appropriation of divine truth ; and such positive spiritual fitness can be cultivated only by having and by keeping the commandments of the incarnate Son. The obedience of faith working through love quickens and disciplines the judgment, not the judgment of mere intellect, nor of common secular or scientific understanding, but of the ' new man,' a judgment profound and discriminating, looking beneath the surface of the letter into the ' deep things ' of the Spirit, distinguishing between the earthly character of cardinal events and their heavenly import, and by an acumen which the intimate interaction of love alone can beget discerning the properties of the Godhead gloriously unveiled by the ideal Man.

Profound spiritual insight and a discriminating judgment disciplined by love is the basis of sound rational reflection on God, of logical thought, and of valid science. Otherwise, human reason is a ship without a rudder ; borne hither and thither by superficial currents of thought, it sooner or later founders on the treacherous rocks of unbelief. Reason is overwhelmed by floods of ignorance and error, because it lacks the firm guidance of divine righteousness, begotten and nourished by devout fellowship with the Son of Man, the Light of the world. " My teaching," said Jesus to the Jews, " is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." " Understanding is the reward of faith," says Augustine ; " therefore do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that thou mayest

¹ John vii. 17.

understand. . . Who does not know that this is to do the will of God, to work the work of God ; that is, to work that work which is pleasing to Him ? But the Lord Himself says openly in another place : ‘ This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He has sent.’ ”¹

¹ Tractate 29, 6.

BOOK FOURTH.

*COSMOLOGY, OR THE DOCTRINE ON CREATION
AND PROVIDENCE.*

CHAPTER I.

PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIAN COSMOLOGY.

§ 147.

The science of Christian cosmology may embrace the entire domain of the universe, including man as the complement of organic and inorganic kingdoms ; or it may embrace only the kingdoms of nature to the exclusion of man.

Christian cosmology studies the world from the standpoint of Christian faith in God ; and claims the right to appropriate to its use all valid results of scientific observation.

I. Heaven and earth, man and sub-human existences, are to be regarded as parts of one system, each and all being integral members of a whole. This truth of revelation which in every age of the Church has been asserted by theology, sometimes with less, sometimes with greater, consistency, is in our day taught and vindicated by natural science, especially by the hypothesis of evolution. Of this universal system of things the final outcome and the noblest exponent is *man*.¹ The natural world does not account for man's existence, nor does it interpret any of the mysteries of human history ; but man is to rational

¹ "To him who could grasp the mighty idea and take in the whole at one view, the entire creation would appear like a solemn hymn, like some grand oratorio, which starting on a few low, faint notes, gradually gains strength and fulness, and swelling louder and louder, rolls

thought the best interpretation of lower organic kingdoms and of inorganic nature. A valid philosophy of the universe is inferable from a valid philosophy respecting man. Whether considered as to his corporeal organization or as to personality, he is the culmination of the vital processes and of mechanical forces operative in lower realms ; yet the mechanical forces and vital processes of nature do not account for his personal constitution.

Therefore rightly to know any lower realm, represented even by the least complex thing, we have also, in addition to its own phenomena and conditions, to know this lower realm in its relations upwards to higher and more perfect existences ; nor may we pause before we reach the complement of inorganic existences and of sub-human organisms in human personality. If we embrace within the compass of investigation and thought all departments of the one grand system, each and all in their subordinate relations to man, we may construct the most complete science respecting the cosmos.

Though between man and the animal kingdom there is no gulf of separation, no absolute difference, yet the contrast between human personality and all impersonal organizations, between human law and all grades of lower natural law, is so great and as to the principle of difference so definite that the general science of cosmology may, as is commonly done, be resolved into two distinct branches, namely, 1. Anthropology, the science respecting man, and, 2. Cosmology, the science respecting the world other than man. Says an illustrious *savant*, " Man, by his form, his

on from harmony to height of harmony until it reaches its loftiest outburst and expression, 'the diapason closing full in man.'" Relation of Man to Nature, by Rev. Thomas C. Porter, D. D., Mercersburg Review, iv. p. 71.

structure, by the general disposition of his organs, is a monkey, but by his intelligence, by the creations of his thought, man is a God."

As the impersonal kingdoms of nature are, according to the teaching of Holy Scripture and the deliverances of natural science, the pre-supposition of mankind, I shall first seek to develop the Christian doctrine of the cosmos, using this word in the narrower sense; and then pass on to consider in the following 'Book' the nature and conditions of the cosmos as realized in man.

2. In pursuing the study of nature the method of Christian cosmology differs from the method of natural science. Natural science by observing, collating and classifying external phenomena, passes from particular facts to general truths, seeking to discover the laws and processes prevalent in all departments of nature. Christian cosmology recognizes the relative value of the observation of facts and of empirical investigations; but its inquiries into the meaning of the world are not pursued chiefly under the guidance of external phenomena. Instead, in as far as Christian cosmology is true to the genius of Christianity, it pursues its inquiries from the Christological standpoint; for Jesus Christ is to be acknowledged both as the beginning and the end of the cosmos.

According to Lotze and many other scientists and philosophers, man may, on the ground of the scientific study of nature, justly lay claim to the dignity of being the microcosm, the sum and the goal of all forces active in lower orders of existence.¹ Christian cosmology accord-

¹ "As Pascal says, one little breath of noxious vapor suffices to kill him; one small stone from the brook is enough to break this frail reed, which is at issue with the furious elements and with monsters possessing the most terrible natural weapons. And yet this reed lifts up

ingly is justified both by Scripture and by natural science in affirming that Jesus Christ, the *ideal* Man, the pure realization of all possibilities latent in the divine idea of manhood, is the final outcome, the highest exponent, of the normal order of the world. The germinal principle of the cosmos has in His personal existence, in His history and glorification, been unfolded into ripest fruit. God's eternal idea, hidden throughout the ages from the ken of mankind, stands forth a completed reality in Him who is the Omega. Not the 'first man,' but 'the second man' is the true microcosm. Says Dr. T. C. Porter:

"As all nature below points upward to man and finds in him its last meaning and end, so do all men in all ages and all nations point upward to one universal Man, in whom the whole idea of humanity is fully and concretely realized, One in whom the real and ideal, the natural and supernatural, the human and the divine join in everlasting harmony."¹

3. Possessing in the ideal Man the concrete revelation of the meaning of the whole world, Christian cosmology is not limited and conditioned by reflection on the conflicting phenomena of nature; instead, it pursues the study of the world as a whole and of all its departments from the standpoint of the mature cosmos, the completed microcosm. The significance of the legitimate outcome of discoveries and of the empirical investigations of scientists are to be duly acknowledged; and the extraordinary achievements in so many departments of physics, in so far as these achievements prove themselves to be valid, are appropri-

itself and holds itself erect when the mammoth, and with him all the mightiest animals of the age have disappeared. Not only does he triumph over them, but he has outlived the cataclysm to which they succumbed because they had no faculty of adapting themselves to a change of environment." Study of Origins by Dr. de Pressensé, p. 498.

¹ Mercersburg Review, iv. p. 74.

ated. But no hypothesis of natural science, no dictum nor inference of scientists, though the hypothesis may be valid in its applications within a narrow sphere, can be accepted as the ruling principle of cosmological thought. The ideal Man, the person of Jesus Christ, affords Christian cosmology an elevated point of view, an Alpine mount for observation, from which it not only studies the ills of mankind and the nature of Christian salvation, but from which with equal propriety it surveys the immeasurable expanse of the universe, its genesis, its history, its teleology.

"When a soul goes to Jesus for salvation, it goes to the standpoint whence alone a truly scientific view of the universe of mind and matter can be taken."¹

§ 148.

The cosmos, consisting of worlds in time and space, inspiring the beholder with awe and wonder, is to the ordinary understanding inscrutable. Whence comes the universe? To what end does it exist? Is the universe self-sufficient? or is it upheld by an energy other than itself? Natural understanding cannot give a satisfying answer; but faith in God makes reply to these irrepressible rational inquiries. Faith in God, as manifested by His incarnate Son, says that the world is the *work of God*.

I. Like God Himself, the works of God are to 'the natural mind' a mystery. The attempt to make an analysis proves a failure. Relations there are binding the world to its Author which are not discoverable by the senses or the common understanding, and are not resolvable into mathematical formulas. There are also mighty forces connecting its manifold kingdoms with one another.

the inorganic with the organic, matter with spirit, which are hidden from the most powerful microscope, and baffle the keenest powers of human insight. No studies conducted exclusively in the light of reason, or in the light of nature, can give an adequate elucidation.¹

Like divine existence, divine activity in its motives, its compass and aims, is to be studied as the predicate of the transcendent realm, the realm of absolute Spirit. Recognized to be Spirit, God is the living, personal God; as the living God He is eternally active; active within the glory of absolute personality in the reciprocal relations of Father, Son and Spirit. Active eternally in the trinitarian mode of His own glory, God also of His free will becomes active by calling into existence temporal kingdoms, relative natures, and conditioned personalities. Finite existences pre-suppose the ground of finitude in the will of infinite Being. Absolute freedom is unchangeably the condition of relative freedom; self-existing autonomy the condition unchangeably of the autonomy of the creature. Thus related, the infinite to the finite, as Christianity affirms and sound philosophy unavoidably postulates, the nature of God's activity *ad extra* necessarily transcends the province of logical analysis.

2. God is the object of spiritual perception. Announcing Himself to man, He is seen by the eye of the soul. God we obey by free self-determination of the will ; He is not comprehended by ordinary intellection. Known He may be in the degree that He is loved and honored.

The work of God bears to us a similar relation. By faith we understand that the worlds are His work. Says

¹Says Dr. Munger: "It is not wonder at primal creation that moves the poet, but the creating power lodged and at work in every road-side flower." Appeal to Life, p. 219.

the Epistle to the Hebrews: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, (τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ), so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear.¹ The original signification would not be more correctly expressed, as some versions render, by transposing the negative particle, and making the passage read thus: "so that what is seen hath been made out of things which do not appear."

According to the best exegesis, the author of the epistle does not by the words: εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐν φαινόμενων τὸ βλεπόμενον γεγονέναι, mean to teach that things visible were made out of things invisible, in other words, not that nature as seen was formed out of nature as unseen, a sentiment which would be in sympathy with pagan cosmogony or with an atheistic theory of evolution; but he means to teach directly the contrary. The time-worlds in their visible phenomena, and in their invisible laws and relations, were constructed by the effluent divine word, ῥήματι Θεοῦ; not out of God's essence were the worlds built up, but they were spoken into existence by God's originative will.² That which was not, that which

¹ Heb. xi. 3.

²According to Meyer, the sense of the passage is: "That in accordance with the decree of God, the fact should be averted, that from φαινόμενα the βλεπόμενον should have sprung; consequently that the human race should from the beginning be directed to the necessity for πίστις." Again: "φαινόμενα are things which appear in outward manifestation, and are perceived by the senses. The expression indicates the domain of the corporeal, the material, and there underlies it the conception that the universe did not spring forth by the power of nature from earthly germs or substances, but was created by the mere word of God's omnipotence." On Heb. xi. 3. Alford's exposition is essentially the same: "οἱ αἰῶνες includes in it all that exists under the conditions of time and space, together with those conditions of time and space themselves, conditions which do not bind God, and did not exist independently of Him, but are themselves the work of His word."

of itself did not begin to be, became by virtue of a wisdom and an energy in kind other than its own. This anti-panthistic truth was never established nor suggested by processes of generalization from visible phenomena; nor has reason, when guided solely by the light of nature, postulated this truth as an *a priori* principle. That the worlds came into existence by the word of God is a *fundamental* fact, a fact discerned alone by the intuitive power of divine faith, the faith quickened and sustained by the breath of revelation.

"In all that we see with our sense, τὸ βλεπόμενον ἐκ φαινομένων γέγονεν. The seed becomes the plant; the grub, the moth. But that which is above sight, namely, faith, leads to apprehend that this has not been so in the first instance: that the visible world has not been made out of visible materials."¹

This primary fact, the *beginning* of the time-worlds, is not knowable by any other faculty. Divine faith, however, is not an act of implicit belief, ignoring experiment. It is, says De Pressensé,

"a higher mode of experiment applied to first principles, the only one applicable in this domain, which does not admit of proof and reasoning because it lays down axioms and fundamental truths."

He adds:

"The intuitive faith of which we speak, is in truth a form of experiment, and the only one adapted to this order of truth. This intuition, by its very nature, cannot be a simple deduction, drawing one after another the consequences of certain premises, for it rises to the principle itself. This it does by the boldest of inductions, breaking through the finite as through the walls of a prison, and lifting itself to the divine infinite."²

3. As by faith we discern the historical fact that the actual cosmos has had a beginning and that it became by God's originative word, so we have also to reflect upon

¹ Alford on Heb. xi. 3.

² A Study of Origins, p. 120.

the nature, relations and teleology of the cosmos mainly under the guidance and with the support of faith. When our inquiries proceed on this principle, we study the cosmos from a point of view which is identical with the genesis of its existence. Like the Copernican theory of astronomy, we look out upon the manifold kingdoms and systems of the universe from its solar centre. Thus we are qualified to affirm that its constitution and relations have been determined by the divine word. Forces are not inherent in the universe independently of the presence of its personal Author, nor are forms of organization the consequences solely of a hidden series of evolutionary processes. If guided and empowered by the light of the divine formative word as manifested by the ideal Man, we may penetrate the inner sense of external visible things ; we may discover the causes of the disturbances of harmony, and apprehend the deepest laws of the universal movement.

We may *know* the world. Not that Christian cosmology may be perfect knowledge; not that faith in the divine creative word supersedes the hypotheses and experimentation of natural science; not that evolution by natural selection within a given domain is necessarily a theory without warrant or incompatible with Christian truth ; nor that all legitimate inquiries respecting nature and man can be answered. What Paul says regarding present knowledge of the consummation of the Messianic kingdom may be applied to the cosmos : 'we know in part.' But what Christian cosmology does learn to know respecting the genesis of the world, its relations and its scope, is real knowledge, though confessedly fragmentary. It is also more profound and of broader compass than the generalizations inferred from the observance and comparison of external phenomena. Scientific knowledge that classifies

innumerable particulars and merely perceives many relations and conditions, but chooses to be ignorant, on the one side, of the originative ground of the world, and, on the other, of the end and purpose of the world-movement, is superficial knowledge, though for many earthly purposes it may have great value.

Therefore we have to regard it as a mischievous error to assert, as Stuckenberg expresses it, that

"science as science cannot recognize God, unless it abandons the sphere of observation and its laws. The terms 'theism' and 'atheism' have no relevancy for science, simply because it limits itself to objects which are affected neither by one nor by the other, just as it is not affected by poetry, history or æsthetics."¹

Truths are many; but they are all closely connected. As man is not independent of nature, and nature does not exist independently of God; so neither is natural truth cognizable scientifically if divorced from moral truth or divine truth. How can the 'objects' of science be *thoroughly* known on the atheistic pre-supposition that they have no ground of existence, or that they are not 'affected' by any connection with any cause or teleology?

§ 149.

The general proposition that by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God implies that this cosmological doctrine, or the reality of the fact which the doctrine involves, is not discoverable by other methods. By no observation of facts, by no kind of metaphysical speculation does the human mind awake to or evolve the idea, that the world has had an actual beginning, or that it came into existence by virtue of a creative word.

1. Standing as we do within the domain of the finite world, all inquiry being conditioned by the categories of

¹ Introduction to Philosophy by G. H. W. Stuckenberg, p. 72.

time and space, and reflecting upon external objects according to the laws of mind, thought does not transcend nor is it able to transcend these necessary categories. If in thought we move backward step by step, passing from finite effect to finite cause, from tangible phenomena to intangible noumena, we shall by the force of logic be constrained to end as we began. We shall come to the affirmation of a finite principle; and that principle will be at most a physical *cause*, not a person. Speculative thought does not find a link of connection between nature and the Author of nature. Between the two realms, the finite and the infinite, there is for the logic of the understanding a chasm which logic has never been able to span, a chasm that admits of no dialectic demonstration.

That the intuitions of philosophic genius do not and cannot discern the fact of a beginning of the world by creation is evident from the history of philosophy. Neither Aristotle nor Plato, than whom the ancient civilization produced no more acute or profound thinkers, got beyond the inherited pagan theory that matter is eternal.¹

¹ According to Plato in *Timæus* God is not *Creator* in the Christian or Mosaic sense, not the author of "all things," but the Former of the *κόσμος*, or a world-builder. His doctrine as expressed by Ueberweg is that, "matter, which existed from eternity, together with God, being absolutely devoid of quality and possessing no proper reality, was at first in disorder and assumed a variety of changing and irrational shapes, until God, who is absolutely good and without envy, came forth as world-builder, and transformed all for ends of good. . . . In bringing order and proportion to the chaotic and heaving mass of matter, he caused it to assume determinate mathematical forms." *Hist. of Phil.* i. § 42. Says Plato: "The Creator compounded the world out of all the fire and all the water and all the air and all the earth." Fire, water, air and earth were pre-existent. "In the centre he put the soul, which he diffused through the whole." *Timæus*, 32. "Fire and water and air and earth were prior to the generation of the heavens." *Ibid.* 48. "The mother and receptacle of all created and visible things, . . . is not to be termed earth, or air, or fire, or

In modern times the same inability is evident from the logical consequences of the criticism of pure reason by Kant and the Kantian school. The materialistic agnosticism of Herbert Spencer is in full sympathy with the negations of Kant. Neither of these able thinkers can by reasoning, the one from the *data* of self-consciousness, the other from the *data* of sense-perception, justify the Christian truth that the world is a creation.

Nor is the negative attitude of critical philosophy or of non-Christian science a matter of surprise. Instead, this negative attitude is to be regarded as the legitimate consequence of logical thought starting with premises that are not commensurate with the terms of the problem. All philosophic speculation, all scientific induction from the facts of external experience, that sets aside the *datum* of revelation, if the process be self-consistent, must terminate in a denial of a *created* world. Creator and creation are correlative. No Creator,¹ no creation. The proposition is self-evident. The want of the recognition of a personal Creator, or the absence of belief in the personality of God, involves the denial of a *creation*. There can be no other

water, or any of their compounds . . . but is an invisible and formless being which receives all things and attains in an extraordinary way a portion of the intelligible, and is most incomprehensible." Ibid. 51. "Let us hold that God made them as far as possible the fairest and best, out of things which were not fair and good." Timæus, 53. Cf. Barrow on *Maker of heaven and earth* in his *Exposition of the Creed*, I. p. 397.

¹ The term *creator* is used by Plato and by other great religious teachers of paganism. But the word is equivalent to former, architect, world-builder, not to *originator*, in the absolute sense, of finite existence. It is true that the good and the beautiful are by Plato attributed to God as their *source*; but the good is emanent from the divine *being*, not conditioned on the free exercise of divine *will*; and it occupies a helpless dualistic relation to matter and to evil, or to matter as evil.

logical consequence. If ratiocination based exclusively on sense-perception or on self-consciousness does not justify the idea of divine personality, it is contrary to reason to affirm the world to be a creation; and the pagan hypothesis that matter, the *ύλη* of Plato, 'invisible and formless being,' is eternal, must in science and philosophy resume sway.

2. The general principle that by faith we understand that the time-worlds have been framed by the word of God implies that faith has a positive object which calls it forth an object which conditions and justifies the affirmation. By faith in *what*, we may ask, does the Christian understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God? Faith is rational; to be rational it needs a rational warrant.

The thing believed, or the object of belief, is certainly not this proposition asserted by the Epistle to the Hebrews. Nor is the proposition to be accepted as undeniable truth just because the writer of the Epistle has announced it, or because it is a Shemitic tradition, or is elsewhere recorded in sacred books. Neither external testimony, nor an authoritative word spoken by a representative disciple, is an adequate justification of Christian faith. That which authorizes the faith of the Christian and supports its rationality is the *Truth*. The Truth authorized this proposition when the Epistle was written. The ground on which its validity rests is the same now as then. Both, the proposition as laid down by the writer and Christian belief, rest on the same basis.

Nor is the faith that the worlds were framed by the word of God simply an intuitive perception of the validity of this thought. Such belief does not satisfy rational needs. It would not be much better than a vicious circle.

Whether without the self-manifestation of God in the person of His incarnate Son human reason would ever have discerned the transcendent fact that the existing world is in the Christian sense a creation, or that the existing world has had a beginning and is now moving toward a pre-determined goal, is a speculative question which it is not necessary here to consider. It suffices to know that human reason speculating in the light of nature, uninfluenced by pre-Christian revelation or by Christianity, has never laid hold of nor even perceived the essential and unchangeable difference between God and nature, between God and man, between the personal and the impersonal. Pagan thought is everywhere pantheistic or dualistic, either confounding Deity and the world, or referring matter and mind to antagonistic principles. In either case the universe, though a cause of matter and of mind, of good and of evil may be acknowledged, has no Author; the worlds in time and space do not as a whole depend on a self-existing Personality for their beginning, nor for their wonderful organization, nor for their on-going from age to age.¹

¹ According to Thales, 640 B. C., the *principle* of all things was *water*, ὕδωρ; according to Pythagoras, 582 B. C., it was *number*, ἀριθμός. Anaximenes, 557, pronounced the principle to be the *air*, ἀήρ; Anaxagoras, 500, *mind*, νῦς; Socrates, 470-400, and Plato, 430-348, *knowledge*, γνῶσις; Aristotle, 384-322, and Zeno, 340-260, *self-sufficiency*, αὐτάρκεια. Epicurus, 341-270 B. C., declared philosophy to be the rational pursuit of happiness, τὸν εὐδαιμόνα βίον.

Anaximander, 611 B. C., first among the Greeks, composed a work on "Nature." Ueberweg says that he first expressly gave to the assumed original material substance of things the name of *principle*, ἀρχή. "As such principle he posits a matter undetermined in quality (and infinite in quantity), τὸ ἀπείρον." With him are to be associated Heraclitus, 460, and Empedocles, 440 B. C. Heraclitus pronounced "the totality of things to be an uninterrupted movement and transformation. . . . All becoming is the product of warring opposites, the harmonious union of opposite determinations. . . . Fire represents the abiding power of this eternal transformation, or the con-

3. The *object* of that faith which is the principle of Christian cosmology is *God*, God as He is manifested by His incarnate Son. Given the Christian God-idea, and we have in it given also the difference as to essence, the qualitative difference, between the Divine and the human, between unconditional Existence and conditional existence. By necessary implication, the cosmos is something derived and dependent, not original and self-sufficient; being upheld by a power and governed by wisdom other than cosmic forces. Any other pre-supposition would contradict divine self-existence.

According to Christian revelation, God is the absolute Personality. As absolute and personal, He is the *author*, the free and independent originator of the worlds, not merely their first Cause; free, inasmuch as the work of creation is referable to His will, the will of absolute love; independent, because conditioned only by the autonomy and resources of His being. Causality is indeed an element entering into the idea of God as author of the worlds; but *cause* as the principle of thought respecting the Creator is in point of quality other than the Christian God-idea. Given 'cause,' and a corresponding 'effect' will exist. Given an 'effect,' and a corresponding 'cause' is by implication affirmed. The connection between the two terms

ception of life in the most obvious way." Empedocles starts with the eleatic thought that not any thing which is had become or can depart and sets up "as unchangeable being four eternal original materials, (after him called the four elements) which receive form by the working of two moving powers, friendship and strife, or attraction and repulsion," thus combining the eleatic principle with the principle of Heraclitus. Schwegler's *History of Philosophy* by Seelye, pp. 32 and 35. Anaximander, Heraclitus and Empedocles are among Greek philosophers, the forerunners of Lamarck, Darwin and Spencer. No philosopher postulated the idea of an absolute *principle*, much less of a personal *originator* of all things.

is not ethical but physical, not free but necessary. Such unfree connection is not commensurate with the relation of 'Creator' and 'creature.' And if in a theistic doctrine of the world the principle of causation be affirmed with emphasis, the doctrine envelops the seed of pantheism. The world is not an 'effect;' no 'cause' can be the *rationale* of it. *Christian* cosmology affirms the self-determined action of the divine Will as the ultimate principle of the cosmos. Conversely, the existence of the cosmos must be referred, not to metaphysical necessity, but to Personality. Otherwise Christian cosmology is converted into pagan cosmogony.

4. Nor is God to be represented by the image of a master-builder, or architect; under this view, the cosmos would be an edifice, a mechanism; and we could not avoid relapsing into the Cartesian doctrine: *Deus ex machina*. The connection between the architect and an edifice is external, lifeless. The edifice embodies his plan, displays his skill; but he is not the active principle immanent in it. God's relation to the world is internal and vital, somewhat analogous to the relation of man's will to his spoken word.¹

However difficult it may be to construct a philosophy of the universe consistently with the God-idea of Christianity, this one fundamental proposition, that the matter of the worlds is not eternal, that the cosmos does not exist of itself, but was formed, was brought into existence, by the wisdom and goodness of the personal Creator, must stand as a postulate which has the value of axiomatic truth

¹Says Delitzsch: Primitive light comes into being, "not in an emanative sense; for it comes into being through the creative word of command, the *fiat* of God, that word in which His will is comprised and energized. Ps. xxxiii. 9." Com. on Genesis, I. p. 82.

for all legitimate cosmological studies. In the endeavor to answer the manifold questions suggested by the relations of creature to Creator this truth has *regulative* force for sound thought.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORLD.

§ 150.

The world addresses perception and thought in two forms: as an existence and a vanishing factor,—as a *fixed reality* and a process of *becoming*.

Contemplating the world as fixed reality, it is *cosmos*, a world in space, or a space-world; contemplating it as a process of becoming, it is *eon*, a world in time, or a time-world.

Cosmos and *eon* correspond to the universal categories of rational thought: space and time.

A scientific Christian doctrine of the world is possible when we inquire into its nature and organization according to both categories.

1. The categories of space and time are each both objective and subjective. They obtain in the external kingdoms of impersonal and personal objects, and in the internal sphere of consciousness and thought.

Time and space are objective; being modes of the actual existence of the constitution of the world. Time and space are subjective; being inalienable modes of the free activity of the human mind. Necessary forms of finite thought answer to necessary forms of finite existence.

The world commands attention and challenges inquiry under this twofold view; as it is now existing and as it has become what it now is,—space and time, cosmos and eon,

being inseparable modes of its constitution. Both forms of apprehension appear in Scripture.

2. The eonic conception is common to the Old Testament and the New Testament. Old Testament writers regard the heavens and the earth exclusively as *eon*, *olam*, a world in time, an onward movement, ever passing through a succession of epochs and periods. The Hebrew language has even no word corresponding to the Greek *κόσμος* until after the return from the Babylonian exile.

The New Testament uses both words, *κόσμος* and *αἰών*; each with a twofold meaning. *Κόσμος* frequently denotes the sinful human race, as in John i. 29, iii. 16, 17; xviii. 36; I Cor. v. 10; Ephes. ii. 2; I John ii. 15, 16, 17; iii. 17. *Αἰών*, the equivalent of the Latin *aeuum*, denotes duration, as in Luke i. 70; Acts iii. 21; Col. i. 26; Ephes. iii. 9, 21.

Both terms are used also to designate the universe, each under a view corresponding to its etymological and radical meaning. *Κόσμος* corresponds to the Latin *mundus*, as in Matt. xiii. 37; xxiv. 21; John xvii. Rom. i. 20. In these places and in others *κόσμος* is the totality of things, the principle aspect of the conception being *form* of existence. *Αἰών* applied to the world denotes the totality of things in its course or flow, or the world in motion, as in Heb. i. 3; xi. 3. Cremer says: ¹

"As *αἰών* may denote either the duration of a definite space of time, or the unending duration of time in general, both future and past, according to the context, it was the proper term for rendering the Hebrew, עוֹלָם—for which the LXX. use it constantly,—the only difference being that the Hebrew word meant *primarily* a remote, veiled, undefined, and therefore unlimited time, past or future, and only *secondarily* a definite (especially a future) period whose limits must be ascertained from the context."

¹ Lexicon of New Testament Greek, p. 75.

The notion of *time* frequently blends with the notion respecting the totality of that which has outward existence during time. As Bleek expresses it, both *olam* and *con* mean 'the world itself so far as it moves in time.'¹

3. Natural science in modern times has been waking up to the ancient eonic conception of the world, so universal in the Old Testament and so familiar to all the writers of the New Testament. We have the nebular theory of La Place. Astronomy is contemplating the heavenly bodies as a product resulting from a process going on through a long series of ages. Geology has discovered that the earth became what it is now by a succession of changes extending through an indefinite period of time. Darwin, following in the wake of Heraclitus and Empedocles among ancient Greek philosophers, and of Diderot, Goethe and Lamarck among modern scientists, has by his celebrated works on the "Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man" given prominence to the theory of evolution. This is not the place to endorse or to criticise either of these theories. Christian cosmology, however, may recognize a profound element of truth in each. Whatever may be the deficiencies of the theory of evolution, or the false attitude many of its advocates occupy toward Christianity, there is in the hypothesis an undertone of sympathy with the profoundest biblical conception of the universe.

The totality of things is not a fixed mechanism, but a world in constant motion, continually ceasing to be what it has been, and becoming what it was not. Evolutional science has done service to the method of philosophizing by aiding to break down external, arbitrary, mechanical habits of thought; and by giving impulse instead to organic

¹ Quoted by Cremer.

methods which are at once far more biblical and far more logical.

4. Of these two modes of existence the eonic is the more profound, comprehensive and philosophical, embracing not only the whole of all past ages, but no less also the whole of all future ages; all past time in its internal relations to the present status of the universe, and the present status in its relation to possible future changes and the final transformation. The cosmic form depends on eonic forces, just as the external structure of an organism depends on the formative power of its life-principle.

I. THE WORLD AS COSMOS.

§ 151.

The cosmos is the organized world as in the form of extension it stands before the eye of the body and the eye of the soul during the current *eon*, addressing the senses and the understanding, addressing the intellectual, moral and religious life of mankind.

1. Apparently a finished economy, in one respect stationary and fixed, but in another an ever on-going process of becoming, the universe shows itself to be an organized whole, displaying order and proportion, beauty and grandeur. Consisting of vast kingdoms of organic and inorganic existences, all single things and all kingdoms are so connected and interdependent, so closely related to one another and to their common end, that each kingdom, each system of things, has its place as a member of the sublime whole, each performing a function both for itself and relatively to all other members.

Every kingdom of life is itself an organism, consisting of manifold subdivisions, of genera and species, and of

numberless individuals, each developing the peculiar type of its kind. Each order of inorganic things is also a whole, revealing law and organization, uniting many classes and manifold varieties into one system. Organisms of different orders, different systems of inanimate things, and various mineral substances are so interlaced and condition one another so wonderfully, that every individual organism of all the kingdoms of life, every single thing and all classes of things enter into the unity. Each according to its relative position conditions both the reality and the organization of the world. The idea of cosmos embraces the sum of finite realities, each as a member of one constitution.

If we confine inquiry to a single individual, an animal or a plant, an egg or a seed, we shall find that it also is not a simple thing, but a complex organization, an economy of existence, a little cosmos, where similar laws of demand and supply, of reciprocal adaptation of part to part reign. If we descend to inanimate objects, a drop of water or a grain of sand, the presence of law, the interaction of forces between kingdom and kingdom, between thing and thing, between a single object and its environment, confronts the eye.

In each of all its constituent parts no less than in its totality, the universe is seen to be a wonderful and beautiful order, an endless manifoldness, existing and going on according to an idea common to all, active in all. A sublime domain of boundless dimensions addresses mind and heart. Upheld and controlled by the agency of its Author in its appointed course, the cosmos, as if self-poised, moves apparently through the same cycle of changes from year to year, from age to age.

2. The cosmos addresses the senses and the understand-

ing. At every point in man's history it conditions his natural life, meets his natural wants, and solicits the responsive action of his bodily, mental and moral powers. If we study man in his earthly and temporal relations, it may be said that he lives and moves and has his being in organic connection with all sub-human kingdoms. In one respect constantly dependent on the external world, on the atmosphere, on the light of the sun and the solidity of the earth, man in another respect is superior to nature, using the earth and natural light for human ends, and relatively independent of natural law, as is illustrated by the telegraph and the telephone, natural laws being made the servants of civilization.

The cosmos arrests mind, and stimulates the impulse to know and to think. Understanding discerns the connection of kingdom with kingdom, detects their differences and gradations, discovers and reproduces natural laws in the sphere of thought. Unconscious nature is apprehended, lifted up, and is translated into terms of science. By observation and thought, by the energy of will, the world of matter is glorified in the higher world of mind.

3. The cosmos discloses order, proportion, beauty. It embodies the truth of art. Invisible ideas become visible in adequate forms. Cosmos declares not the skill of the architect, but the genius of living Spirit. External worlds address the phantasy. He who has ears to hear nature's voice is moved by profound harmonies, and awed by terrific discords. He who has an eye to see spirit in organic and inorganic kingdoms detects the beautiful looking forth upon him from innumerable objects in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. This wonderful economy of lifeless matter in organized forms touches the sympathies of self-conscious spirit, provoking the faculty of imitation,

and stimulating the impulse to reproduce the face of nature in ideal creations.

The fundamental reason for the response of feeling and thought to living spirit formative in nature may be found in the unity of the cosmos seeking expression in personality. The genius of beauty constructive in sub-human kingdoms is ever dynamically active in man, struggling onward toward higher and more perfect realization. Its relative consummation is attained in his outward figure and his psychological constitution. Man developing and perfecting the conditions and laws of the beautiful in the unity of body and soul, is the noblest embodiment of divine art; hence he becomes the foundation and the possibility of a new empire of beauty.

The empire of art pre-supposes and involves the true and the good. The mechanic arts and the fine arts are possible inasmuch as man is endowed with ethico-spiritual life. The ideals of genius are wrought out by conscious efforts of imagination. Says Dr. H. W. Parker: "Imagination proper creates the ideal. The ideal is the perfect idea embodied in form."¹ Nature from the smallest grain of sand to the most perfectly developed animal, offers her productions as fit means for the accomplishment of human ends, some lower, others higher, and all in the service of truth and goodness. Normal ends are prescribed by individual and social needs, or they are suggested by education and culture, or by the progress of civilization, or they are involved in the organization of the state and the worship of the church.

Provoking thought and demanding the action of will, susceptible in all its parts of transformation and glorification, and inviting the plastic force of mind, the cosmos is

¹ Spirit of Beauty.

by agriculture, by mechanism, by art, by morality, and by religion, integrated with and raised up into the realm of personality, whereby from intelligence and will it acquires new qualities, new relations, and becomes the bearer of new powers. The wilderness becomes the garden, deserts are changed into fruitful fields, the soil, rocks and forests are glorified by transformation into palaces and temples. By ten thousand methods, fire and water, light and air, countless objects, living and lifeless, are trained to be docile servants of man, and through man to become the glorified servants of God. Under many and varied forms all kingdoms of the cosmos, lying helpless in the swaddling bands of nature, call for the intervention of human personality, proposing and 'groaning' to be lifted up, 'delivered' from limitations, and perfected by the energies of moral agency and the grace of man's redemption.¹

Objectively, man is the final outcome and crown of the cosmos, the complement of its laws and kingdoms. So subjectively the conscious autonomy of human spirit is the realm in which the mysterious import and the strugglings of impersonal forces attain to a god-like mode of existence. So long as not interpreted by human spirit, the cosmos is meaningless and speechless. Man in personality fulfils the economy of the world; he voices natural sounds in truth-bearing words; gives to all harmonies and all discords a tongue, collects all mechanical and organic forces into himself, and composes them into psalms of praise to their author.²

¹ Rom. viii. 18-24.

² Cf. Ps. cxlviii. Says Delitzsch: "In this Psalm the loftiest believing consciousness is united with the grandest possible view of the world. The Church appears here as the leader of the praising uni-

4. Though the cosmic is a necessary element of the world-idea, it is nevertheless comparatively unsatisfying in human experience, and unsatisfying to philosophy and theology. The seeming revolution of the sun around the earth from day to day, and the regular annual succession of the seasons, from one generation to another, correspond to the monotonous, ever-recurring changes in all departments of organized life. Birth and growth, decay and death, form the frigid circle, the heartless treadmill for every living creature. The world consisting of kingdoms so manifold, so beautiful and grand, if contemplated apart from its eonic processes, apart from its ground, its epochs, its evolutions and its ultimate goal, seems indeed to satisfy human needs, to be correlative to the laws of reason, seems to be subservient to moral ends and to spiritual aspirations, but in reality it meets no human demands fully, satisfies no necessity of personality, and ever betrays the confidence which it invites. The cosmos excites hopes to disappoint hope. Like an *ignis fatuus*, it mocks the purest yearnings of the heart.

Back of disappointment and mockery lies a fiend-like

verse. It knows that its experiences have a central and universal significance for the collective life of creation; that the grace bestowed upon it is sufficient to transport all beings in heaven and on earth into joyous commotion. . . . How is this to be explained? . . .

Rightly understood, the summons proceeds from the wish that every creature, by becoming, each in its own way, the echo and reflection of the divine glory, may participate in the joy at the glory, which God has bestowed upon His people after their deep abasement. This wish is based in the last analysis upon the great truth, that the way through suffering to glory, which the Church is traversing, has as its end not only the glorifying of God in itself, but also, by means of this glorifying, the glorifying of God in and by all creatures, and that creation, transformed at last into the likeness of glorified humanity, will become the clear mirror of the divine doxa and a veritable thousand-voiced hymn." Com. on Psalms.

spirit, hostile to order and harmony, to peace and hope. Friendly and sympathetic in appearance, summer and winter come and go laden with pleasing gifts ; but the gifts of nature, notwithstanding their usefulness and their beauty, notwithstanding their kindly ministry to bodily and mental and moral needs, conceal the malignant poison of death. The sympathy and friendship of the cosmos is her method of relentless disintegration and dissolution. From the moment of birth, the life of human personality, bound up with the external world, is through youth and manhood a constant battle with hostile natural forces. The conflict is deadly. The mighty tremors of the earthquake, the consuming lava of the belching volcano, the ruthless furrow of the cyclone, the mountain flood of the Cone-maugh valley, the arrow that flieth by day, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday, all declare a genius of enmity to human life and human good, a diabolical enmity that laughs at the cruelties and the horrors wrought, hour by hour, by her sullen, triumphant tread. Let man resist as he will, let him use his knowledge, his skill, his great inventions, yet the contra-human workings of cosmic forces are persistent, relentless, all-consuming. The discoveries and achievements of natural science, modern material progress and the accumulations of wealth, leave man, the crown of nature, lying hopeless in the iron clutches of the devouring Moloch.

II. THE WORLD AS EON.

§ 152.

The world is a continuous movement from within, a dynamic process, addressing perception and thought in the form of a succession of epochs and periods, running through the whole course of the ages. The process is twofold: physical and ethical, or impersonal and personal.

Subordinate periods may be divided into three: three in the sphere of the physical and three in the sphere of the ethical world.

I. The eonic conception of the world apprehends its present movement in two directions: in its organic connections backward to its actual beginning in time, backward to its extra-mundane Author; and in its relations forward to its ultimate consummation. The consummation will be a condition other than the current organization of the world, and transcending it under a character at present indescribable. As it now confronts the eye and appeals to the understanding, the world has attained to an intermediate transitional state, intermediate between its beginning and its maturity.

In its relation to past time the present status is the result of a process, physical and ethical, partly normal, partly abnormal, which from the beginning has through the ages been continuously going forward. In its relations to the future, the present status is the basis and condition of another cosmos, a different mode of finite existence, when dynamic forces, some mechanical, some vital, some personal, now latent and hidden, will spring into action, and determine a more mature stage. As the existent cosmos has transcended and superseded its former state,

so will the present state be transcended and superseded by an eon now secretly ripening toward its bloom.

2. The world confronts us as a dynamic process, when contemplated in its totality. The totality embraces the physical and the ethical, embraces sub-human kingdoms, the Adamic race, and the angelic community of personal beings. Different and opposite classes of existences enter into the unity of the world, not merely as concomitant or associated realms, but comprehended as integral parts. Men and angels, men and nature, stand connected with one another as members of one organic development.

Each kingdom contemplated by itself is a process, evolving its idea according to its own law. But no single kingdom by itself, whether living or lifeless, whether personal or impersonal, fully realizes the idea of an eon. Each particular process of development is only one factor of the universal process. If all sub-human kingdoms, the organic and the inorganic, might be taken and held within the grasp of the world-conception, that unity would not be the *world*, either as eon or as cosmos. All departments of sub-human existence together form but one impersonal spiral movement which is subordinate to the ethico-spiritual development. The world as eon embraces all cycles of created existences ; each in its place pre-supposing all lower processes, each in its place conditioning all higher processes.

3. The first eon in the sphere of the material and natural is that indefinite formative age which antedates the heavens and the earth, an age of manifold forces which resulted in the production of the cosmic economy as this has been standing since the beginning of human history. This pre-historic formative age shows points of transition from one stage of evolution to another—points at which

physical forces reach a crisis in convulsive throes and give birth to new cycles of motion with corresponding productivity. Pre-historic eons and epochs are traced and postulated by astronomy and geology ; are dimly reflected by mythologies ; and they press boldly into the foreground in the sublime account of the formation of our world as given by the first chapters of Genesis.

4. The second grand cycle of the natural world, is the existing cosmic economy. Unceasing changes are now going forward ; but since the upheaval of the continents, and the formation of oceans, mountains, valleys, and plains, of lakes and rivers that adorn the face of the earth as at present it is moving before our eyes, neither natural science nor revealed history announces epochs in the sphere of the physical, which, as regards momentousness, may be compared with the epochs which characterize the history of the ethical world. But both the observations of naturalists and divine revelation teach that mighty agencies are held in abeyance, agencies which anticipate tremendous convulsions impending, to break forth in the fulness of time. As the pre-historic eon of the physical universe was superseded by the action of persistent forces which developed into the current eon, so in the current eon physical forces are slumbering which, when touched by ' the Ithuriel spear,' will suddenly issue in the passing away of the present heavens and the present earth, to make room for another and a different organization of the world.

The *laws* of nature are to be regarded as the same from age to age, but the doctrine of the *uniform* operation of these laws is not to be accepted as true in an absolute sense. Within a given cycle, or eon, when the conditions are for a time permanent, successive processes are similar.

The same laws under different conditions at different epochs work results in differentiated forms. Multiformity is a marked phenomenon in all kingdoms ; and it increases as we ascend from the lower to the higher. Variations declare the action of new forces, forces that before were either latent or non-existent. "That was the case," says Schmid, "with the first appearance of organic life, also with the first appearance of beings having sensation and consciousness; moreover, it was the case with the first appearance of each of the thousands of species of organic beings."¹ In every physical and impersonal kingdom things are forming that before were unformed ; and individual organisms are becoming that before had not become. The law of heredity is in successive generations modified by a principle of which neither heredity nor environment give any account. "In each new development, in each expansion of the form and the informing idea, there has been a fresh manifestation of an intelligent cause."² The new is evolved from the old by a force that is other than the old. The fact of an ever-continuous modification of things, of an unchanging process of change, of an uninterrupted becoming, addresses perception and thought from every department of nature

5. The final eon will be the conclusion of all past and all current world-processes. The original purpose of God in bringing the universe into existence will not be frustrated ; but the meaning of present and past commotions, of the confusion and the contradictions of the current eon will be manifested in the triumph of truth, and goodness, and beauty. His wisdom will be justified by the final perfection of the works of His hand.

¹ Theories of Darwin, by Rudolf Schmid, p. 330.

² Study of Origins, by De Pressensé, p. 176.

Christian cosmology looks onward in confidence and hope; whilst naturalistic speculation terminates in despair. Says De Pressensé: "M. Renan and M. Soury agree in the conclusion that all that we call good or virtue is mere delusion and vanity, and the end of existence is a great blank. . . . The final utterance of both is a note of despair."¹ Like Hartmann and Schopenhauer, they are lost in the starless night of pessimism.

§ 153.

Closely connected with the dynamic processes of the physical world is the more wonderful process going forward in the kingdom of ethical and spiritual-life. In this realm world-processes reveal notable epochs and definitely marked periods.

1. Like the formative age on the plane of the material and natural, the first ethical eon precedes the introduction of man. Manifold classes of personal spirits, all in their original state pure and good, are formed by the creative word.

The pre-human eon of the ethical creation passes through a convulsive epoch. Moral evil begins. A part of the ethical kingdom apostatizes from allegiance to the Creator. Thenceforth in the pre-human world of spirits there is wickedness and folly, antagonism, disorder and confusion.

The geological ages evident to natural science and indicated by the book of Genesis condition the present structure of the physical world; so do the pre-historical moral disorders which originated and persisted in the ethical realm condition the false moral phenomena which characterize the history of the human race.

¹ Study of Origins, by De Pressensé, p. 234.

The original condition of the physical economy and the original condition of the ethical economy in the pre-human age answered each to the other. The normal activity of ethical beings relatively to God and relatively to the *prima materia*, was the condition of reciprocal harmony between the physical and the ethical. The physical world in its beginning may have been akin to the *nebula* which astronomy postulates ; may have been crude and undeveloped, bearing in itself manifold possibilities which in course of time were developed, but chaos as chaos was not abnormal, and sustained no abnormal relation to spirit. Chaos was good, not evil, like the germ in the seed ; good as the beginning from which by the creative and plastic divine word worlds in time and space were to be evolved. "It must be denied that the bad, to say nothing of evil itself, is already to be found in the conception of the state of nature."¹ The two kingdoms, the spiritual and the material, the personal and the impersonal, were in their incipency integral parts of one germinal system. The normal activity of the ethical was the condition of normal reciprocal activity between the physical and the ethical. The physical was the condition of the reality of the ethical, but not of the positive freedom and the perfected character of the ethical.

When moral evil became, physical evil also became. Ethical contradiction involves physical discord. When personal spirits began to be active contrary to God, they by that false voluntary attitude began to be active against themselves and against the normal constitution of their material environment. Physical evil was begotten of false autonomy. The birth of sin was the beginning of antag-

¹ Martensen's *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 161.

onism between spirit and spirit; therefore, also, the beginning of unideal contrariety between spirit and matter.

2. The second grand con in the history of ethical life begins with the creation of a being endowed with a physico-ethical constitution, a constitution which in its laws, its relations and all its possibilities was in accord with divine truth and divine righteousness—man. The state and normal activities of the primeval man matched the conditions, and on the preliminary plane fulfilled the design of sub-human kingdoms.

The con which opens with the introduction of man complements the divine idea of pre-human history; and will extend through all the ages onward to the consummation of the existing world-order.

Two decisive epochs give character to this second grand physico-ethical cycle. The one is the apostasy of the human race from fidelity to God. Untrue to God man becomes untrue to his own nature and environment; and, in a relative sense untrue to sub-human kingdoms.

The lapse of man from the ideal process of moral and spiritual development is an event corresponding to the moral defection of angels during the pre-human age. Angelic defection conditions, not the possibility, but the reality of man's apostasy; whilst human apostasy conditions the realization of the genius of moral evil in all human relations.

The other decisive epoch is the advent of the second Man, His sinless birth, His ethico-spiritual perfection, and His complete triumph over nature, and over all evil, moral and physical. The 'second Man' is the new beginning of the human race, a beginning which embraces the ethical and physical constitution.

As the creation of the 'first man' complemented the

pre-human physico-ethical process, so all pre-Christian history, physical, ethical and religious, is complemented by the presence and revelation of 'the second Man.' Each advent marks the introduction of a new type of life and a new realm. Each realm conditions the other. The 'first man,' the complement of sub-human kingdoms, conditions and anticipates the 'second Man.' The 'second Man' pre-supposes and fulfils the idea of the 'first man;' being complementary to *all* demands of the Adamic race, the essential demands implicit in the original human constitution, and the accidental demands arising from a nature disorganized by moral and physical evil. This second epoch is the new creation of Adamic humanity; and the new creation is the principle of a reconstruction of the entire physical organism. It subordinates to itself, progressively, all lower kingdoms, all vital forces, all mechanical laws, all the antecedent events of history. Related thus backward and forward the plastic power of the 'second Man' becomes the chief factor in the movements of history, of the moral world and the natural world.

From the false attitude of the 'first man' relatively to God and to all lower kingdoms; from the ideal attitude of the race in the person of the 'second Man,' who triumphantly maintains Himself and His kingdom as the fundamental law for human history and for nature; from the self-maintenance of the good against the might and cunning of evil;—from this contra-ideal action of world-powers come the moral conflicts, the confusion of evil with good, and the terrible convulsions of social and civil life which characterize the current eon. Abnormal forces in the natural world are in conflict with the normal action of natural laws, and divine authority is in conflict with angelic rebellion. Good and evil in the realms of the ethical

and in the realms of the physical stand arrayed, each against the other.

Seemingly the cosmos is a ship at sea without pilot or rudder. The storm is loud; the waves are rolling mountain high; but the Author of the cosmos, who is the immanent principle of normal processes, and the righteous condition of antagonism, has His hand on the rudder. He is ruling in the midst of the confusion, so disposing the convulsive throes of the world, and so controlling the events of history, that the storm-tossed ship is steadily moving amid the threatening waves of the current on toward her original haven.

3. The third eon will be final, transcending all epochs and all periods of antecedent history. It will open with the second advent of 'the second Man.' During this crisis the current eon will reach its conclusion, and the final eon will begin. Then the Good and the True realized in the kingdom of God will develop into perfection, and achieve the final triumph over the powers of moral and physical evil. The intent of the physical will be glorified in the ethical; the ethical in the spiritual, and the spiritual glorified in God.

The hidden meaning of all antecedent eons is to be brought to light in concrete form. The divine world-idea struggling through the ages will be fulfilled when its progressive development shall have reached its goal.

Nature as interpreted by the light of nature ends like the growth of the plant or like the life of the animal, in dissolution. There is no outcome worthy of its wonderful construction. Nature interpreted by the light of the resurrection of Christ ends in transformation and triumph.

III. AS EON AND COSMOS.

§ 154.

The world as an established reality and the world as a continual process of becoming, must be studied as the two modes of the same thing. The best illustration of their interdependence is the growth of the individual man; who unites in one organization a permanent type of existence with unceasing transitions from form to form.

I. The connection between the cosmic form and the eonic process is reciprocal; but the process, the development and growth, conditions the outward organization. All changes of outward form in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, all changes of condition in human society, are shaped by the principle of life animating the world-process. What the heavens and the earth are at any given moment cannot be known merely by observing, collecting and arranging present phenomena. Present phenomena are the phenomena of an existence in process of becoming something other than what it has been or is now.

Phenomena are referable to the unseen types and laws of the different kingdoms of the world, types and laws active in the objective existence filling its forms. The potencies which are causing present phenomena are related to antecedent powers on which present potencies are conditioned. Every period in the history of the development of unseen forces, whether vital or mechanical, pre-supposes antecedent forces; these in turn pre-suppose others. To trace this process from effects to causes through a series of periods, thought moves retrogressively, without being able to draw the line beyond which the retrogressive move-

ment shall not go. Thought postulates a beginning, but thought cannot fix the beginning. There is no solution of the problem unless thought recognizes the transcendent Author of the beginning from which movements in time take their start.

All external phenomena of the world have sub-phenomenal antecedents from which phenomena derive their import and significance. As each period of antecedent energies pre-supposes a previous period of energy, how shall we grasp the meaning of external phenomena unless we understand the sub-phenomenal? And how shall we interpret sub-phenomenal forces unless we read the sub-phenomenal in the light of the entire series of antecedents? And how shall we understand the entire series of conditioning antecedents unless we study both phenomena and noumena in the light of the general idea and the ultimate purpose of the universal whole?

The cosmic form stands in the eonic movement; and the successive modes of existence vary with every new epoch of the world's history. So far as natural science can go, this truth of Christian cosmology is in our day partially recognized, especially by the hypothesis of evolution.

2. The best analogy of the interdependence of the eonic and cosmic categories of the world is the individual man, the world in epitome. The age of a boy, any status at which by growth and discipline he has arrived, conditions his figure. As from year to year his life unfolds and realizes its type more definitely, his body changes its form, his talents are more pronounced, and his character becomes more mature. If his growth be normal physically, intellectually and morally, then age and size, advancing life and outward stature, the eonic and the cosmic, will answer each to each. Finally, when the boy attains to

maturity, his manhood will be the consequence of the progress of normal growth. His physical organization, his intellectual strength, his moral character, and his professional skill will all be referable to the constant interaction of internal and external conditions, to the operation of invisible laws of life, and to the environment of the family and the school, of society and civilization, of the state and the church. To account adequately for the figure and the character of a boy at any given point in his boyhood, we have to study his character and his figure in their vital relations backward to the events of his individual history, and to his parentage. To account for a mature man at his best estate, we have to study the man in his relations to the history of his family, to his nationality, to his education, and to all social conditions and personal habits which have entered into the construction and development of his individual life. The processes of human growth at every moment actualize themselves in the reality of external form and personal character. Conversely, form and character at every moment pre-suppose corresponding energies working in physical and ethical processes.

The individual man is the microcosm; the microcosm is the ripe fruit of the macrocosm. Individual human history is an epitome of the history of the universe; the stature and character of a man in relation to his growth and education, represent the cosmos in its relation to all the processes by which the world, moving through a series of ages, has attained to its present mode of existence.

More, however, than mere analogy may be accepted. The physical process by virtue of which the individual person has passed from the inception of the embryo to the full maturity of figure and strength is, as to kind, identical with the macrocosmic process.

"For thou hast brought forth my reins,
 Thou didst weave me together in my mother's womb.
 I thank thee that I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
 Wonderful are thy works,
 And my soul knoweth it right well.
 My bones were not hid from thee,
 I who was made in secret,
 Curiously wrought in the depths of the earth.
 As an embryo have thine eyes seen me;
 And in thy book were they all written:
 Days which were sketched out,
 And for it one among them."¹

The growth of a man is the crowning cycle of world-growth. "In the formation of each man there is repeated, according to the view of Scripture, the manner in which the first man was made."²

If the maturity of a noble manhood be the outcome of human forces, of forces active according to the law of heredity through a succession of families, in the individual representative of this law, then this fact, the individual microcosm, is the most perfect realization of the energies and laws of the cosmos. We have in consciousness, and before our eyes, the twofold truth of the world, the cosmogonic process becoming the cosmologic existence. The world as a whole we may know in the proportion that we know the world in its crowning product and embodiment.

3. Though eonic truth is the more profound and the more significant, it is not independent of cosmic truth. The time-world declares its meaning in the manifold outward forms of the space-world. If we put the question, what

¹ Ps. cxxxix. 13-16. Delitzsch's version as rendered by his English translator, Rev. David Eaton, M. A. "Regarded theologically, this is one of the richest of all the Psalms." The elements of truth in the Lamarckian theory were anticipated by the author of the 139th Psalm.

² Delitzsch, Cf. Job. xxxiii. 4, 6.

is the world? what is external nature? or if, with Kant, we ask: what is "das Ding an sich"? the answer of Christian cosmology must be this: the unseen nature of the world, the qualities which inhere in it, may be seen in the phenomena of its lower and higher kingdoms. The noumenal may be read in the phenomenal.

The assumption that the noumena differ as to quality from the phenomena, or that when we know the phenomena we know nothing of the noumena, involves a logical contradiction. If the reason did not intuitively discern the dynamic connection, the inseparable unity, of the observed facts of nature with nature's qualities as manifested by observed facts, it would be impossible to deny knowledge of the noumena. The assertion that nothing is known of the nature of the objects of sense rests on a perception of their nature. If the dualism of the Kantian agnosticism were objectively real; if it were contrary to the laws of reason to affirm the nature of an object of knowledge, then Kant would not have been able to postulate an essential difference between the noumenal and the phenomenal. The genius of the human reason asserts its prerogatives in spite of a defective hypothesis. Therefore, rightly considered, it is consistent with the positive truth underlying the negations of the Kantian school to maintain the proposition that observed facts, the outward forms of things, when discriminately studied and definitely apprehended, qualify us in a degree to look into the inner processes of life, and into the quality of mechanical forces. Thus we may discover the specific types and manifold laws of the different kingdoms of the world.

Cosmic forms accordingly condition clear insight into eonic processes. Neither truth may be adequately developed independently of the other. The cosmic form, though

superficial when contrasted with dynamic processes of development, is nevertheless an essential element of a complete Christian doctrine respecting the world.

§ 155.

The Hebrew doctrine emphasizes the world chiefly as a creation. The heavens and the earth are in the Old Testament set forth as the work of God, and commonly as a finished work. "On the seventh day God finished His work which He had made." Again: "For He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast."¹ The conception of time-worlds, *ôlāmim*, of ages successively following each other, comes to view prominently; but it is the energy of the divine word bringing into existence things which before the creative word was spoken did not exist, that Old Testament writers insist on as fundamental truth.

In the pagan conception, it is the opposite aspect of truth which is dominant, and holds sway. Mythology and pagan philosophy observe the continuous processes of formation and disintegration, of generation and development, of decay and dissolution, as is evident from the Greek *φύσις* and the Latin *natura*. The world has become and is becoming by virtue of occult forces active in it, forces which the gods may touch and shape, but which they have not originated, nor are they able to control or to supersede.

Whilst the Hebrew seers fix the eye of faith principally on the creatorship of Jehovah, on His interposition at will, and His unlimited control over heaven and earth, the law of development, the principle of growth and decay, ever working in the bosom of nature and human society does

¹ Gen. ii. 2; Ps. xxxiii. 9.

not retire into the background. On the other hand, whilst the myths of paganism hold beliefs fixed on the phenomena of birth, of growth and of death, they fail to recognize in the natural processes of formation and of generation the creative energy and the directing will of one transcendent personal God.

Christianity affirms the elements of truth which underlie pagan cosmogony and Hebrew cosmology. The *Logos*, the Word of God, speaks; by successive acts of creative energy He *forms* finite things, and in the act of forming imparts to them quality and reality.¹ The things whose origin and existence are conditioned on God's will become in turn relatively self-acting and self-formative. Every kingdom is endowed with causative powers, each according to the divine idea of its own cycle of existence. The truth discerned by pagan intuition and grotesquely embodied in mythical imagery, is resumed by Christianity and firmly held in vital connection with the fundamental truth emphasized by pre-Christian revelation.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORLD AS A CREATION.

§ 156.

The account of the beginning of the world in its existing form given in the first chapters of Genesis is not only valid, but when understood in the light of completed revelation it is also to be accepted as of primary and perpetual significance. Emphasis is to be put upon Genesis as the *beginning* of the teaching of revelation. Complete the account does not claim to be.

1. The records of Genesis reflect the manner in which,

¹ John i. 3.

through the agency of the Spirit, the objective transaction by which heaven and earth were formed, addressed the mind and heart of primitive seers. If we judge of these records by their connection with the whole compass of revelation, we shall have to recognize the fact that Genesis gives but a partial account. On the one hand it reflects facts, otherwise unknown, of the first creation as culminating in the primeval man; on the other hand it anticipates the complemental creation and complemental revelations of Messianic history in ages to come.

2. The meaning conveyed to the mind of a Christian reader involves two factors.

The principal factor entering into the representation is the *language* and imagery of the record. The record portrays the beginning of the world in sublime forms suited to the immature capacities and primitive culture of God's people in their own age.

The secondary factor is the judgment of the interpreter. His fitness to understand language in which original events involving the relations of Creator to creature are set forth, is largely conditioned on his general conception respecting the origin and history of the world. Is he in sympathy with the fundamental idea reigning in the record? Is he a learner? Does he come with a teachable mind, desiring only to know what are the facts as held and affirmed by primitive seers?

Or, does he come with philosophical hypotheses, or a scientific theory, that after thousands of years of investigation and thought has come to prevail in the modern world? Does not *divine* revelation pre-suppose an organ answerable to the subject-matter of divine revelation? Would it be possible to record the beginning of the world in scientific speech at a time when there was no natural

science, no modern scientific mind? Would not a record answerable to the Copernican system be an anachronism? Would it not prove itself to be a human invention? not the word of divine wisdom?

The challenge made by some systems of philosophy and the criticisms of some scientists proceed on a postulate respecting the biblical record which is not only unbiblical, but also unphilosophical and illogical. If the record, by any consistent interpretation, could be made to square at all points with a system of philosophy or a theory of natural science, the record would demonstrate itself to be the product of a philosophic thinker, or of a theorizing scientist; it would be reduced to a human plane, and be referable to an inspiration of man, not to an inspiration of God.

Nevertheless it is important to recognize the truth that in fundamental features an agreement with facts of science, or, as Zoekler remarks, "an ideal harmony," actually exists.

"For it is established," says Delitzsch, "or at least remains uncontradicted, that, setting aside primitive matter, light is—as this account teaches us—the first of substances; that the formation of stars was subsequent to the creation of light; that the creation of plants preceded that of animals; that creatures form an ascending scale, and that man is the close of the creation of land mammals."

3. The aim of the record is religious and ethical;¹ neither scientific nor philosophical. The graphic representation as to its form answers to primitive conceptions of astronomy and geology. The question is not whether primitive notions respecting the structure of the earth and of the heavens are valid when measured by a foreign

¹ Dr. Schaff says somewhere that "the Bible is from the beginning to the end a book of religion." Cf. *Comm. on Genesis* by Delitzsch, vol. I. p. 57.

standard, but whether in forms answering to primitive modes of apprehending the heavens and the earth primary elements of divine truth respecting the beginning and the formation of the world are set forth.

Several elements of original truth challenge confidence, all are of fundamental importance and of unchangeable worth.

4. *One* distinctive truth is that the 'beginning' of the world is referable, not to the world, but to its super-mundane Author; not to mysterious processes of production, and reproduction going forward in all kingdoms of the universe, but referable to creative will. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This doctrine respecting the *beginning* of the world distinguishes the book of Genesis from all pagan conceptions of its origin. Franz Delitzsch says:

"The cosmogonic legend has experienced the most various mythological transformations; we have it here in its simplest and purest form, in which no human being having been a spectator of the creation (Job xxxviii. 4), it points back to divine information as its source, It is part of that primitive revelation which resounds throughout all heathendom in reminiscences of every kind. It is God who discloses to man what we here read. It was impossible for him to know all this from himself, exclusively *lumine nature*."

"The true greatness, however, of this narrative of creation consists in its proclaiming, at a period of universally prevailing idolatry, the true idea of God, which is to this very day the basis of all genuine piety and culture. This monotheism is specifically Israelite; and the fact that the natural heathen disposition of Israel unceasingly reacted against it, shows that it was no product of nature, but a gift of grace."¹

5. *Another* element of truth is the relative selfhood, or the plastic power of productiveness with which by the creative word the kingdoms of the world were endowed. Chaos bore in itself the possibility of transformation.

¹ New Commentary on Genesis, I. p. 61.

When the Spirit of God was brooding upon the waters ; then God said : " Let there be light : and there was light." Light was of and by the creative word ; but the waste and void, and the darkness upon the face of the deep, according to the record, antedated the light, thus conditioning the presence and function of light. The primary differentiation of light from darkness pre-supposes the brooding Spirit of God upon the face of the deep.

This principle runs through the whole representation. The 'waters' condition the formation of the firmament, and the formation of the earth. The earth conditions the growing of the grass, the herb yielding seed and the fruit tree bearing fruit. The primitive seer does not teach that God said : Let there be grass ; let there be herb and fruit tree ; but God said : Let the *earth* put forth grass. In like manner the firmament conditions the lights of heaven, the sun, and the moon and the stars.

When we approach the animal kingdom, the seer does not represent God as saying : Let there be the moving creature that hath life ; let there be the fowl flying above the earth ; let there be cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth after its kind. Not this ; there is no immediate creation. God indeed creates ; but the creation is mediate. He works in and through antecedent things, laws, and forces. According to the seer God said : Let the *waters bring forth* abundantly the moving creature that hath life ; let the *earth* bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind. Genesis teaches a cosmogony, a process of becoming, no less than a creation.

When we approach the beginning of the human race, the account proceeds after a manner in very remarkable contrast with all preceding representations. Man does

not begin to exist by virtue of a spoken word. God is not set forth as saying : Let there be man, as He had spoken light into reality. Nor does God say : Let the earth bring forth the living man ; nor does He say : Let the beast of the earth become man. These conceptions of origin are wholly transcended. The account, on the contrary, proceeds thus :

And God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

In the first account man pre-supposes the existence of the animal and the plant, of the earth and the firmament : yet sub-human kingdoms do not produce man, nor evolve into him. Instead, man's creation is signalized by a unique act, distinguished above all other divine acts in the history of beginnings. God Himself stands as his archetype.

The two records of man's creation, Genesis i. 26, 27, and ii. 7, differ from each other. Whilst in the first man pre-supposes the lower kingdoms, in the second the lower kingdoms pre-suppose man. Yet in neither does man, like the tree, grow out of the ground; or, like the living creature, does the earth bring men forth. Both distinguish man from all other creations by the fact that he is brought into existence by the direct formative action of God.

6. The *third* element of original truth in the records of Genesis is the *unity* of the world.

From the first creative word by which light was spoken into existence onward to the end of the sixth day, when God finished His work, and rested on the

¹ Gen ii. 26, 27.

seventh day from all His work which He had made, there is unbroken continuity. There are indeed successive epochs ; but the epochs are points of transition; from chaos to 'day' and 'night,' from light to a division of water under the firmament from the waters above the firmament, to 'heaven' and 'earth.' At every epoch during a series of periods called 'days,' God interposes by His creative word, but His creative word is active formatively in and through antecedent kingdoms, each becoming the basis for the following creation. One pre-mundane will conditions and energizes the formative work and the cosmogonic process through all periods.

In one respect, man forms no exception. The second account says: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Though God formed him in His own image, there is no chasm between his constitution and the world below him. Man on the one hand is the end of the cosmogonic process, and on the other he is through all pre-human ages its hidden pre-supposition.¹ He is 'the final cause' of divine crea-

¹ The recognition of this truth discloses an agreement between the two varying accounts of man's relation to sub-human kingdoms given in Gen. i and 2. If understood externally according to the letter, the two accounts are contrary. But may we assume that the Jehovist, who "gives the deepest insight into the nature of sin and grace," did not see that the truth of the one account would refute the other? If, however, as Rudolf Schmid suggests, we see in Gen. i. the actual reality of the circumstances of the creation and in Gen. ii. their ideal character, the two accounts are consistent. For whilst in the actual order of the cosmogonic process man is last, in the idea of creation he is first. Historically the successive kingdoms of nature condition his existence, but in truth he conditions the entire series of sub-human kingdoms. As Schmid puts it: "Man may be called in one sense the first of creatures, inasmuch as with the first organism that was already given which was afterwards developed into man, and inasmuch as all

tive activity. The ideal beginning of the world, and the ideal condition of successive periods of mediate creation, man at length at the close of the sixth day appears in the form of reality, the actual personal truth, who stands forth the Lord of all kingdoms below him.

7. These three elements distinguish the primitive record : 1. God as the author of the world, by whose origina-tive and formative word chaos, the earth waste and void, and darkness upon the face of the deep, were brought into existence : 2. The cosmogonic process, by which latent types and powers, of divine origin, through the immanent action of the Spirit, develop into a series of kingdoms : 3. The unity and continuity of multitudinous things and kingdoms, lifeless and living, organized into one system, of which man is the outcome and the crown.¹

Each element is valid, whether judged by Christianity or by natural science. The *first*, science is constrained to postulate ; though God be recognized only as the 'First

which was otherwise created and developed as a special species was only present on account of that aim ; and man in another, in the merely empirico-historical sense, is still also the last of creatures." Theories of Darwin, by Rudolf Schmid, pp. 317, 320.

¹ Truths of infinite importance are expressed, says Delitzsch, in this account of creation, not as dogmas, but as facts which speak for themselves. "These truths are : 1. There is one God who, as the One Elohim, unites in Himself all the Divine, which was by the heathen world shattered to pieces and dispersed among their many Elohim. 2. The world is not the necessary and natural emanation of His being, but the free appointment of His will, and brought to pass by His word. 3. The world originated in an ascending gradation of creative acts, and this successive nature of its origin is the foundation of those laws of development according to which its existence continues. 4. The object of creation was man, who is on the one hand the climax of the earthly world, on the other the synthesis of nature and spirit, the image of God Himself, and by His appointment the king of the earthly world. These are the great truths with which we are confronted in the tradition of creation, as we here have it, free from mythological deformity." Comm. on Genesis, I. p. 62.

Cause,' or as the 'Unknowable.' The *second* element, the cosmogonic process, exclusively emphasized by mythology, affirms a truth which has suggested the doctrine of evolution. And the *third* is the sublime fact which Christianity fulfils and science is endeavoring to grasp.

§ 157.

In expressing the opinion that the 'days' of creation in Genesis name indefinite periods of time, Christian theology anticipated modern theories of natural science.

Science furnishes no criterion of judgment concerning the validity of the teaching on beginnings in the first chapters of Genesis.

1. No one questions the fact that the scholastic theology of the medieval ages and the evangelical theology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries commonly interpreted the six days to be definite periods of solar time of twenty-four hours each. The great theologian of the fifth century, however, discerned in the 'days' of Genesis *indefinite* periods of time. Augustine says :

"In these days the morning and the evening are counted, until, on the sixth day, all things which God then made were finished, and on the seventh the rest of God was mysteriously and sublimely signalized. What kind of days these were it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible for us to conceive, and how much more to say."

Again he says :

"And first of all, indeed, light was made by the word of God, and God, we read, separated it from the darkness, and called the light Day, and the darkness Night; but what kind of light that was, and by what periodic movement it made evening and morning, is beyond the reach of our senses; neither can we understand how it was, and yet must unhesitatingly believe it."¹

This suggestion, due to a keen, penetrating perception, of a 'periodic movement' of indefinite length, took firm

¹ City of God xi. 6, 7.

hold on the theological world, and it has lived through the ages down to the present time, notwithstanding the fact that many theologies, bound by the letter, interpreted the 'day' in Genesis to mean the brief period of twenty-four hours.

2. To assume that this account of the creation must in its details be in harmony with modern science is unwarranted. Either to question its truth because it cannot be measured by a foreign standard, or to vindicate its truth by an attempt to show that it is conformable to some theory of natural science, is a wrong. The account does not fit, does not answer to all the demands of science, because the account is not a scientific statement, and has no scientific purpose. A *scientific* tradition in that primitive age would have been an impossibility ; or, if it had been possible, it would have had no significance for God's people. The mode of apprehension which characterizes the record is the primitive mode, the mode in which the psychological capacity of that infantile age was able to grasp the stupenduous objective fact, that God "in the beginning created the heaven and the earth," and by a series of formative acts through the Spirit brought into existence kingdom after kingdom, until at the close of these formative periods, when the heaven and the earth were 'finished,' the fulness of time arrived and the primeval family of man was created in God's image. There is here neither a science of astronomy, nor of geology, nor an evolution by natural selection,—nothing but sublime teaching concerning the formation of the universe of which God is the author and man the final complement.

3. Not the sun, not the moon, nor the stars are to be the objects of adoration, as among the Canaanites ; neither the creeping thing, nor the sea monster, nor the beast of the

field, is to be worshipped, as among the Egyptians, but Jehovah alone who made all things that are 'in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth'; He, not His creatures, is to be adored.

And Man, made in God's image, is by his Maker endowed with the prerogative of authority and dominion 'over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' He is not formed to bow down before them and to serve them; but they are formed to bow to man's will, and to serve him; yea, all creatures are to serve him as their lord, as he, the lord over all things, is made for the service of no God but the living Jehovah.

No interpretation can deal legitimately with these primitive records which overlooks their religious and ethical scope. This is fundamental. However valuable the facts of astronomy may be, or the investigations and discoveries of geology, the aim of 'Genesis' is higher and nobler. Genesis meets a profounder need; dissipates a more ruinous ignorance, and bestows a far richer blessing.¹

§ 158.

The account of creation as given in Genesis is the primitive mode of representation. The full and final cosmology of the Bible comes to view in the New Testament.

1. In the Old Testament we have no revealed truth, no teaching respecting any historical fact, in its final form. The representation of the creative process is to be accepted as true, as a mode in which the objective transaction is

¹ Menken is right when he says: "If the first three chapters of Genesis are taken out of the Bible, it is deprived of the *terminus a quo*; if the last three chapters of the Apocalypse are taken away, it is deprived of the *terminus ad quem*." Quoted by Delitzsch.

rightly portrayed, a mode suited to the demands of primitive ages, but it is not to be accepted as the only or the ultimate expression of Bible doctrine. Like the ceremonial law, Genesis presents a figure¹ of the truth. The objective transaction is broader and more profound than the power of apprehension of the primitive age. Only under some definite outward aspects did the creative process then address the intuitive perception of seers.

Not that the form of representation in Genesis contravenes the objective formative process. Not that fundamental facts as they actually took place were one thing, and fundamental facts as portrayed by primitive seers are another thing. In its essential features the picture answers to the reality. The truth of the objective transaction was partially apprehended by primitive seers after a manner of which they were capable.

2. When revelation advances and becomes complete in the personal history of Jesus Christ, when a better capacity has been cultivated among the covenant people, then the same objective transaction, the creative and formative processes of the world, come to view under different and higher aspects. These new aspects of truth respecting creation are so different from the old representation in Genesis, that to a superficial student the two volumes of the Bible may seem to be contrary. Opposition there is verily, but no contradiction. The final revelation supplements and fulfils the primitive revelation.

So soon as we are disabused of the superficial opinions of non-christological science; so soon as we clearly discern the far-reaching significance of the *ôlāmim* of the Old Testament and the *eons* of the New Testament; so soon as we recognize the Christian truth that the formative process in

¹ Rom. v. 14. Cf. Matt. xi. 13.

the physical and moral world is working towards a definite goal, a goal now potential and approaching realization but not now in actual existence, and from the Christological standpoint consider in a legitimate way the relation of the final revelation to the primitive form of representation; we shall be able to see in *Christian* cosmology the complement of primitive records, and in these primitive records discover both correctness and rich symbolization of the entire objective process.

3. Christian cosmology is to be studied in two ways: 1. in the light of that unique idea respecting the personal Christ and His mediatorship which addresses us from the Gospels and the Epistles; and 2. studied under the guidance of those views of the world which the inspired writers of the New Testament present.

In the one case we study the *Person* and the personal history of the *Son of Man* as mirrored by the New Testament; in the other we study the *conceptions* of the *world* as expressed by the writers. The difference is wide.

As reflected by the New Testament Jesus Christ is the new *Man*. This new Man is the true, the final microcosm; and the final microcosm is the Man, Christ Jesus, in His glorified state. The perfected Man exhibits the ultimate world-form as cosmos and the ultimate world-process as eon. In His person and in His history, 'on earth, in heaven and onward to the Parousia, He takes up into His mediatorship the world-idea, actualizes this idea progressively, and thereby revealing it to those who have an eye to see Him in His cosmological significance, declares its principle, its eonic law, its teleological purpose from 'the beginning' through the succession of the ages onward to its consummation.

The Logos, the personal Word, is the ground of a two-

fold order of world-existence. The first formative world-process culminated in the first Adam; the world-process of the second creation will culminate in the last Adam.¹ The first creation described in Genesis we must study in the light of the second creation described by the apostle John;² the lower world-order is illumined by the higher world-order, the less perfect by the more perfect.

4. The New Testament abounds with definite references to the formation of the world, to its present state, its teleologic movement, and final destiny. In manifold ways the cosmic significance of the incarnate Word challenges our faith. The universe as a whole, the heavens and the earth, are in sympathy with His mediatorship and with His second Advent. That will be the final epoch, the consummation of both the new and the old creation, of the old in the new.

There are particular passages, however, where the profound and the comprehensive idea of the New Testament writers is brought out much more prominently than in many others. Such passages are, John i. 1-14; Col. i. 14-21; Rom. viii. 18-23; Eph. i. 17-23; I Cor. xv. 20-57; II Peter iii. 5-13; Rev. i. 4-8; xxi. 1-9. Instead of attempting to present the Christian doctrine of the first creation in detail, I propose to unfold characteristic elements of it, and I shall do this in the way of thetical statement rather than by dialectic argument.

¹ I Cor. xv. 45.

² John i. 1-5.

§ 159.

The actual world is the creation of the *triune* God. In one view of it the world has had a beginning ; but under another view it has had no beginning.

A similar twofold statement applies to its future history. The world as now existing will come to an end ; but the world as it shall be transformed and perfected by the Son of Man will be a continuous existence.

1. The world is a creation, not an emanation. Christianity denies that anterior to 'the beginning' of the world-process in which by the divine word the world as moving onward during the current eon was fashioned, there was chaos, or chaotic material, *ἄλη*, eternally pre-existing, or *prima materia*, which was transformed by divine wisdom and power. Christianity also denies that the world is referable directly and immediately to an arbitrary fiat of divine will.

According to the New Testament, the world is the work of the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit. There is no one passage which answers fully to this formula ; but New Testament teaching, if taken as a whole, and if its parts be studied in their connection, it will be seen, presupposes and involves the truth of the proposition.

The world in its last ground is the eternal idea of God the Father. To us, says Paul, there is one God the Father, of whom are all things, (*ὁ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν*) and we unto Him ; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him,¹ (*δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ*.) As here represented, the world is of the Father *through* the Son.

¹ I Cor. viii. 6.

The Son mediates the Father's originative activity. In his Epistle to the Colossians Paul teaches that the Son is the archetype of the normal reality of the world and of the normal world-historical movement.¹

The Son as the organ of the creative work includes the complemental activity of the Spirit. It is written that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters;" "by the breath of the Lord were the heavens made;"² "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created;"³ and "by His Spirit the heavens are garnished."⁴ Throughout the Old Testament the Spirit is the agency by which God works in nature, among the nations and His chosen people. To the first creation in all its periods the Spirit bears a relation analogous to the relation which He bears to the new creation, the glorified Son of Man. Pervading and energizing all things, the Spirit fills all things with the divine word and shapes the eonic processes of the world toward the fulfilment of the purpose of divine wisdom.

The universal whole of things as actual existence obtains in the domain of time and space. In this respect finite, its laws, conditions and processes are to an indefinite extent accessible to the researches of human reason. But since its origin, or actual beginning, is conditioned on the will and formative activity of the triune God; since the current eon conditions a future eon when the meaning of the present shall ripen into fruitage; and since, as Paul teaches in Rom. viii. 18-23, its ultimate state is connected with the completion of the kingdom of God, for "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God;" the world, whilst the present age is in process of

¹ Col. i. 16.² Gen. i. 2; Ps. xxxiii. 6.³ Ps. cii. 30.⁴ Job xxxi. 13.

growth, is to the common understanding, as also to Christian reason, largely a *mystery*. It has a depth and breadth of meaning that is inaccessible to natural science, a meaning seen and appropriated only by the logic of faith, guided by Christian revelation.

2. In one view of it the world has had a 'beginning.' There was Existence when it did not exist. But in another view the world has had no beginning. As to idea it antedates its actuality.¹

The world as actual finite reality, as motion in time and as existence in space, began by the *word* of God. The creative word expresses the unity of divine reason and divine will. True, the mind cannot think a concrete *beginning*. Thought like man himself is active in the sphere of time. The time forms, present, past and future, enter into the organism of the soul and into all psychological phenomena. If thought attempts to move backward step by step, from effect to cause, from consequence to principle, and chooses to pause at any point as the first of the series, thought in the very act pre-supposes an antecedent something, a something which conditions the point at which it presumes to pause. Logic however is not the only rational activity. The unmistakable and universal impulse of reason to find a beginning of the world's existence, a beginning in the absolute sense, declares the mysterious working of a deeper principle of personality, a divine intuition which seeks to surmount time conditions.

¹ Martensen says: "John teaches, on the one hand, that the existence of the world has its ground in a creative *Production*; on the other hand, that the world exists in virtue of a *transition* from not-being to being, through a growth, an arising, a birth, a *feri*, a *γίγνεσθαι*. The world therefore has had a twofold beginning, a cosmogonic and a creative, a natural and a supernatural beginning." Christian Dogmatics, p. 119.

That intuitive effort is the necessary belief in the self-existing One, as to life timeless, as to mode of personal existence spaceless.

Faith in the absolute One as author of the world involves for rational thought a moment of transition from the realm of divine idea to the sphere of the real, from the non-existence of the world to the beginning of existence; or as Martensen says, "a *transition* from not-being to being." Before the creative word was spoken the world as a reality other than God was not; time was not, there was no eonic movement; space was not, there was no cosmic form. Time began with *prima materia*. Says Augustine: "*mundus non in tempore sed cum tempore factus est.*"¹ In like manner Christian faith in God requires us to say: the world was made not in space but with space; or as Lotze maintains: "Things exist, and space exists in them."

The proposition of philosophy that the mind may conceive the non-existence of the world, but cannot conceive the non-existence of space involves two fallacies. The one is, when philosophy imagines the non-existence of the world it mistakes the subjective category of space for the real space-world; it is the abstract category that is retained when thought ventures to annihilate the world. The other is a still greater absurdity. When I think the non-existence of the world and imagine that space may nevertheless be postulated, I am involved in a thor-

¹ City of God, xi. 6. "If the infallible Scriptures say that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, in order that it may be understood that He had made nothing previously, . . . then assuredly the world was made, not in time, but simultaneously with time."

Plato has a similar thought: "Time, then, was created with the heaven, in order that being produced together they might be dissolved together, if ever there was to be any dissolution of them." *Timæus*, 38.

ough contradiction ; for the thinker is a part of the world. The imaginary endeavor amounts to this, that by thinking the non-existence of the world I think my own extinction.

3. The Bible does not teach that the world was made "of nothing." The axiom of ancient philosophy is in one sense valid : *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. An entity cannot become from non-entity. In this sense Aristotle pronounced the axiom. Without the knowledge of the true God, who is the absolute One, pagan thought could scarcely accept any other principle. It could not in the Christian sense affirm the contrary positive truth which may be expressed by the opposite formula : *Ex Aliquo aliquid fit*. Something pre-supposes Something. But the pre-supposition is not some *Thing* but some *One*, not matter or stuff, *ὕλη*, but spirit, *Aliquis* not *aliquid*. The idea of a world postulates either the eternity of matter, or a supermundane Originator. The eternity of matter may be required by the logic of paganism, but its dictum does not satisfy the deeper necessities of the reason ; for no act of the soul is more rational than the act which affirms a first Principle. Ratiocination demands a foundation-truth on which with unwavering confidence it may rest. Agreeably to this irrepressible necessity of the reason, Christian faith affirms that Something conditions something ; but the Something which conditions the world is not a world-germ, not *ὕλη*, or elemental matter, analogous to clay under the hand of the potter, but a personal Being on whose will elemental matter itself is conditioned.

The doctrine that the world was made 'of nothing' appears among the Jews during the last two or three centuries before Christ. It is not to be found in any canonical book of the Old or New Testament. It is taught in II. Mac. vii. 27 : "I beseech thee, my son, look upon the

heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not, (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων), and so was mankind made likewise." The same doctrine is taught by the Heidelberg Catechism: "Who of *nothing* made heaven and earth;"² also by medieval scholastics, and by leading Protestant theologies. This method of teaching is scriptural and Christian if by the formula, *of nothing*, no more is designed to be asserted than that before the first creative word was spoken there was no pre-existing material, no *prima materia*, which by the creative word was transformed into the existing world. Or as Pearson expresses it: "Whatsoever entity the heaven and earth had when made, had no real existence before they were so made."³ This is the equivalent of the exposition of the *ex nihilo* by Anselm: "Dicitur aliquid esse factum de nihilo, cum intelligimus esse quidem factum, sed non esse aliquid unde sit factum."⁴ Taken in any other sense the formula: *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, comes short of cosmologic truth as taught by the Bible. Theology has unwisely encumbered itself with this negative formula suggested by paganism. Against the illogical consequences that spring from pure negation the positive conception of creation has for ages had to struggle.

4. Christian faith affirms the 'beginning' of the world to be only a relative beginning, not absolute. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This positive divine transaction justifies the affirmative formula: *Ex Aliquo aliquid fit*. The beginning of the world

¹ Dr. Schaff says that the second book of Maccabees is "an extract from a larger work on the subject by one Jason of Cyrene, but we know neither this Jason nor his work, nor the epitomizer. The extract must have been made before the destruction of Jerusalem."

² Heidelberg Catechism, Ques. 26. ³ Pearson on the Creed, p. 79.

⁴ Monologium, C. 8.

is a beginning that postulates pre-existent Personality. Self-existent Personality is its condition and its ground.

A concrete beginning pre-supposing a self-existing ground is the only kind of beginning which either Christian faith can affirm or sound philosophy can recognize as rational. As the idea of creation pre-supposes the idea of Creator, so does the idea of the finite world pre-suppose the idea of the Infinite. There is a positive fullness of Being which exists anterior to cosmic existence, a personal One who freely determines the concrete *prima materia* of the world.

Pre-supposing an Author, and grounded in the freedom of absolute autonomy, the world became. God's positive life of love is the eternal possibility of an entity other than God ; but only its possibility, not its actual existence. We may say : the concrete or actual beginning, postulates an ideal beginning in divine freedom. This antecedent beginning is the cosmic idea of the triune God.¹ God in the person of His Son is the eternal archetype of the world as cosmos and as eon. *Ex Aliquo aliquid fit*, may be accepted as an axiom of Christian faith and Christian philosophy.

¹ The Christian doctrine of God affirms the essential difference between God and the world, between Creator and creature. So Christian cosmology has to maintain the *difference* between God's eternal idea of creation and the creative word by which the idea became realized in actual existence. The opinion that denies this difference, maintaining that the divine purpose and the execution of it are and must be simultaneous, resolves absolute autonomy into physical necessity, and cannot logically escape the errors of pantheism. Tayler Lewis says that our philosophy may not like the word *anthropomorphism* ; "there is none perhaps to which the common irreligious thinking affects to be more opposed; but we cannot escape from the thing itself; and why should we wish to escape from it? All religion, all revelation, is a divine anthropopathism. No other is conceivable." *The Divine Human in the Scriptures*, p. 11.

5. The world in one view of it will come to an end ; but the end will be relative only. Under another view the world will be a continuous existence.

The cosmic form of the world as it now obtains is the product of all antecedent forces, physical and ethical, divine and human. When the current eon will be superseded by the impending eon, of which in the onward flow of history it is the condition, the actual cosmos as it addresses perception and thought will cease to be. Heaven and earth as existing and moving are continually upheld by divine energy, and so heaven and earth will be upheld and governed until they have become ripe for a new epoch of the creative Word. As 'in the beginning' God said : Let there be light, and then through a succession of periods the firmament became ; the earth and the seas, grass and herb became ; lights in the firmament, and living creatures on earth became ; and the present time form of 'all things' began to be realized ; so when the current age shall have ripened into 'the fulness of time,' when the life of the swelling bud will be ready to unfold its secret intention, the world by the same creative Word will be transformed, and the existing cosmos will give place to another stage of its existence.

The reality of the cosmic economy as our age knows it is therefore to be regarded as intermediate and incomplete, as limited and circumscribed. The process is a ceasing to be in form what it is, and a coming to be what in reality it is not. The crisis of transition is the 'end of the world.' But the fact of the end, as well as the beginning, is the affirmation of Christian faith. There are indeed intimations in its past history and its present conditions of an impending catastrophe which the eye of science has not failed to discern. But neither science

nor philosophy has affirmed an end as affirmed by Christianity.

An end the theory of evolution anticipates, but the end is negative, an exhaustion of forces, a sombre dissolution. Says Herbert Spencer :

“ Motion under resistance is continually suffering deductions, and these unceasing deductions finally result in the cessation of the motion.”¹

Further on he says :

“ There is always a differential progress towards either integration or disintegration. During the earlier part of the cycle of changes, the integration predominates—there goes on what we call growth. The middle part of the cycle is usually characterized, not by equilibrium between the integrating and disintegrating processes, but by alternate excesses of them. And the cycle closes with a period in which the disintegration, beginning to predominate, eventually puts a stop to integration, and undoes what integration had originally done.”

“ Everywhere and to the last, therefore, the change at any moment going on forms a part of one or other of the two processes. While the general history of every aggregate is definable as a change from a diffused imperceptible state to a concentrated perceptible state; every detail of the history is definable as a part of either the one change or the other.”

“ The process thus everywhere in antagonism, and everywhere gaining now a temporary and now a more or less permanent triumph the one over the other, we call evolution and dissolution. Evolution under its simplest and most general aspect is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; while dissolution is the absorption of motion and concomitant disintegration of matter.”

As evolution ignores Christian cosmology and the ideal Man, there is no alternative but to conceive ‘all things’ under the image of the ‘natural’ man. The human body is born, grows, blooms, then declines, dies, and decays. So, according to non-Christian science, the cosmic has no mission but to become ‘vanity of vanities.’

6. As Christian faith affirms only a relative beginning of the world, so it also affirms only a relative end.

¹ First Principles, Herbert Spencer, § 96, 97.

The existing time-form will not in the absolute sense be abolished. No annihilation is impending. As the world did not come of 'nothing' so the world will not return to 'nothing.' The end will be the cessation of its present incomplete and disorganized mode of actual existence. The imperfect status will be superseded by a status of perfection; the abnormal will be destroyed, but the original idea of the world will be developed and realized. The destruction of the universe taught by Scripture¹ will be the ordeal of transition; and the transition, considered under its positive aspect, will be in accord with the intent of the creative Word, with the upholding word, and with God's governing purpose.

The end of the world will synchronize with the consummation of the Messianic kingdom. By Spirit internally connected with one another, nature as well as man and the Church militant will undergo transformation. "And He that sitteth on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new."²

The physical creation accordingly involves profound connections with the eternal and spiritual realm both in its ground and as to its teleology. The end like the beginning is to be interpreted from its relation to Spirit.

The category of time conditions thought regarding a term in the future as really as regarding an origin in the past. A relative end may authenticate itself to human reason. Of an absolute term *ad quem* or *a quo* we cannot think; if we attempt it whether in one direction or in the other, thought at once becomes entangled in the meshes of self-contradiction. Not so of a relative term, a bound to an existing order of things. Of an organic transition from an acorn to an oak, or of an architectonic transition

¹ II Peter iii. 5-7.

² Rev. xxi. 1, 5; Cf. Isa. lvi. 17.

from a forest to a palace we can think legitimately. So we may think of a transition from the crudeness of infancy to the maturity of manhood. According to the same law we may conceive of a transition from a less perfect to a more perfect age of the world. An approximate conception we may also develop of the cosmos passing from an abnormal organization to a normal constitution ; however impossible it may be now to anticipate the manner of the transformation, or understand its conditions, Christianity holds the physical and ethical world in unity as distinct parts of one system. The advent of the creative Word was the condition of the origin of the actual world. The advent of the personal Word in the glorified Son of Man conditions the world's final consummation.

§ 160.

The world is a unity, the unity of various lower and higher branches of existence, of manifold kingdoms, genera, species and individuals. The organic is distinguishable from the inorganic, psychic life from plant life, the personal from the impersonal. Different branches of existence, manifold kingdoms, and innumerable genera are not aggregated, but constitute integral parts of the cosmos, all of which find their complement in personality.

1. All classes of creatures were brought into existence in and with the process by which the succession of periods of one whole has been evolved.

When by the creative word the divine idea became actual, the members of the cosmos began to realize the elements entering into the scheme of the cosmos. In the degree that the eonic process is the normal process ; in the degree that the world's actual existence answers to

God's idea, we have God's wisdom manifested in cosmic organization.

As the world now stands it is the result of the conic movement, including physical processes and the ethical action of personal beings, but conditioned at every point on the immanent presence and directing will of its Author. Every class of creatures has its own type, its own law, its own particular province, its own phenomena. Each class has its corresponding environment, and stands in ordained relations to other classes below it and above it. No kingdom ceases to exist after its own type. No genus relinquishes its kind and becomes another genus. The discoveries of natural science are no proofs to the contrary. Says Dr. de Pressensé :

"If by evolution we mean the graduated scale of being rising by successive stages, life becoming fuller and more defined with each upward step, then evolution is but another name for the order of the universe. It corresponds to the principle we have found running through all creation, that the lower exists in view of the higher, and serves to uphold it. This kind of evolution does not at all imply that one species can be transformed into another; they may succeed each other and yet not spring out of one another."¹

Naturalists have tabulated 'the order of the universe.' There is a *post hoc*, a regular succession of species; but the *propter hoc*, the principle that the lower species accounts for the higher, has not been demonstrated.

In the normal condition of the cosmos there is no confusion of kingdoms, no contradiction between organic and inorganic forces, between animate and inanimate things, or between personal freedom and impersonal laws. The type of every order of creatures seeks to maintain itself in harmony with the divine world-idea.

It is the divine world-idea as in part actualized in all

¹ Study of Origins, p. 182.

classes and kingdoms of which self-consistency and harmony may be predicated; not the actual world as disorganized by contra-ideal forces. The actual is not now, nor has it as yet ever been the perfect counterpart of the ideal world.

2. Inasmuch as the world embodies and is fulfilling the divine idea, the laws of manifold kingdoms and genera are to be viewed, not as independent forces, much less as antagonistic principles, but as ramifications of one principle, one fundamental law.

The world-idea unites the divine reason and the divine will. As there is one plan, one archetype, of the cosmos, so there is but one will originative in the processes of creation. The one will active by the first creative word, active in 'the beginning,' when the foundation of the universal whole was laid, becomes the immanent energy in the organization of the actual world, the continuous directing energy in all epochs and stages of the eonic movement. This originative and immanent energy grounded in the transcendent divine will, is the one fundamental, all-controlling law of the cosmos, the law which anticipates, sustains and governs all grades of secondary causes, physical and ethical. As the manifold parts of a tree express its type; as personality conditions and pervades the physical laws, intellectual faculties and moral functions of a man, so does the immanent energy of the creative will express itself in the particular laws which operate in the many kingdoms, the many genera and species that enter into the complex organization of the universe.

As the lower kingdoms condition the higher, and in turn the higher pre-suppose the lower; as all kingdoms find their fulfilment and complement in man, (whom natural science acknowledges no less than Christianity

teaches to be the crown of nature) the immanent will of God, continuously active in all spheres and in all things, fulfils the end of creation in the birth of human personality. Personality is the final reality of the world as cosmos, the final outcome of the world as *eon*. The constitution of man centralizing itself in *ego*, declares the universal intention of creative agency, the true import of all kingdoms.

3. We may therefore pronounce the world an *autonomy*.

The autonomy is derived, relative, dependent. But as conditioned and relative, the autonomy is real. The world in distinction from God is a reality, and its reality involves *selfhood*. As Christianity denies that the world is an emanation from God's essence, so it denies also that the world is a lifeless thing, or a meaningless play of mechanical forces. Both the deistic as truly as the pantheistic doctrine deny or fail to see Christian truth. Pantheism pronounces God to be the profound abyss of indeterminate being that by development grows into real existence in the formative processes of nature, and finally attains to personality in man. On this principle the world is itself the absolute autonomy, a cycle of physical and ethical existence, ever proceeding forth from itself, and in turn ever returning into itself. There is no rational teleology. Deism, on the other hand, converts God into an architect. The world becomes a shell without a living kernel, a helpless thing from which God is shut out and separated like the machinist from his machine.

In opposition both to deism and pantheism Christianity pronounces the world to be an organic whole, sustained and guided by the dynamic presence of its Author, endowed with autonomous powers culminating in man, and therefore capable of determining its condition and history in harmony with or in opposition to the wisdom of the Creator.

§ 161.

According to the divine idea of the world man is its head and lord. The design of sub-human kingdoms is fulfilled in his personal constitution ; and harmony between himself and lower kingdoms turns on his positive freedom and fidelity.

1. In man the world becomes a selfhood, a physico-ethical constitution. He embodies and expresses what lower kingdoms prophesy and demand. This reciprocal relation between man and sub-human kingdoms implies a given teleology. There is a purpose appointed by the Creator for the creation, a purpose which is to be accomplished by the creature. Creation exists, and it evolves ; it is upheld for an end, a goal, which is the final cause of its existence, and of its history ; but a goal to be attained by the activity of the creature according to the fundamental law and all ramifications of law pervading its own constitution.

Man is related to all realms of nature somewhat as *ego* is related to the human body. Different, at no time confused, much less identified, the two things, body and soul, are an indissoluble unity, of which *ego* is the dynamic centre or the self-acting law. *Ego* inhabits the body as its universe, upholds it, subjugates it, and uses it for personal ends ; the body in turn by its material elements, by its mechanical conditions, and vital functions is fitted for and designed to be the genial organ of the *ego* in fulfilling its supreme vocation, which is, to be the companion of God and the vicegerent of the world. Through the organism of his body man is a corporate member of nature, and nature by its laws and connections is bound up with man as its complement.

In the individual body and soul condition the truth of manhood, each according to its own office acts on the other and becomes a necessary condition to the other in fulfilling its designs; so man, the unity of the physical and the ethical, and nature, as other than man, condition each other reciprocally. Nature, as the lower, the impersonal realm, conditions the possibility of man and his normal activities, whilst man realizes all the elements of nature, all its laws, all its processes. In human personality the world attains to its needful, satisfying, perfecting centre.

In point of fact there is much hostility of nature to mankind, and for the reason that the existing attitude of man toward nature, of nature toward man, is contra-ideal. But the miseries of existing confusion and contrariety pre-suppose the original force of the ideal relation.

2. The autonomy of the world as centralized in man involves the possibility of the contradictions to which experience and observation bear witness.

If the creature were a machine, it would be active only as by some Power it is acted upon. All phenomena of the world, all sorrows of human history produced by the deadly convulsions of nature, all social upheavals, all human conflicts would be normal, the natural effects of the grinding wheels of blind, heartless Time.

If, on the other hand, God and the world, the Former of nature and natural things, were identical, the possibility of a contradiction, of an abnormal conflict of forces, would with equal necessity disappear. Moloch would be the symbol of God.

But when we discern the generic difference between God as Creator and the world as creature; and when we recognize the fact that by the wisdom of the Creator the

creature is endowed with relative autonomy, we have to affirm a twofold truth : 1. The Creator and the creature, are opposite ; the selfhood of the world is other than and set over against the absolute selfhood of God. God is to the creature the Object confronting its autonomous life, and the creature is for God an *object*, an object of His will and His knowledge. 2. The opposition between Creator and creature conditions and anticipates accordant action, and creaturely perfection ; but ideal harmony and perfection are to become actual by the autonomic activity of the creature. By the very conception of creaturely autonomy, discord, when the world became relatively complete by the formation of man as the complement of nature, was possible, but only *possible*.

To the maintenance of harmony between the world and God, between man and sub-human kingdoms, the constitution of the world was pre-adapted. But as the realization of ideal harmony depends now, and depended from the moment when God pronounced His work 'finished,' on the self-determined activity of the creature, the harmony in the beginning prevailed only in its incipient stage. As regards final perfection it was a harmony that might or might not become actual. The organic whole fashioned by the divine hand being relatively autonomous, the creature might choose to violate the will and purpose of the Creator as also to violate the fundamental law of his own constitution. The conditions of ultimate ethical and physical perfection involve the possibility of self-perversion,—the possibility of the entrance of the disturbing forces of evil into the domain of the cosmos.

Moral evil and physical evil are to be predicated of whatever is contradictory to the divine world-idea. It may be impossible in surveying the geological ages of the

pre-human con to draw the line between the ideal process and contra-ideal conditions. It may be equally impossible to draw that line definitely when we contemplate physical upheavals, and the violent changes going on in the vegetable and animal kingdoms. Nor is it necessary to draw these lines of demarkation in order to maintain the general principle that for ages contra-ideal forces have been active in sub-human kingdoms, especially as affecting lower kingdoms in their relation to man. The history of all civilized or even half-civilized nations is a witness to the truth of biblical teaching and of Christian belief respecting the physical disorders and the moral wrongs which are burdening the world.

§ 162.

From this view of creation as endowed with relative autonomy and involving a teleological process, it follows: 1. that the world as pictured in Genesis was not the finished world; and 2. that after ages of commotion and development, the world has not now attained to its completion. The ideal of the Creator has not become a final reality either in the sphere of personality or of impersonal kingdoms.

1. Before our eyes in the heavens above, on the earth beneath, and in the history of the human race, we behold an incomplete order of things, a world in process of becoming.

This proposition does not contradict the teaching of Genesis: "And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."¹ Interpreted agreeably to the analogy of biblical teaching, the statement that 'on the seventh day God finished His work,' describes His work

as it was completed at the close of the sixth day. The completion is relative ; the language is not to be understood as teaching that the creative activity of God had in the final and absolute sense terminated.

If the world were a mechanism; if its parts were constructed and adjusted by the hand of God alone, it might at once be complete. Heaven and earth as they now confront our senses might be the actualization of its author's plan. But if we concede that the world is a unity, an organized constitution, endowed with relative autonomy, and that it is moving toward a predetermined end set by the creative word, a goal to be reached, not only by the controlling presence of the divine will, but by a process of development to be determined by the normal exercise of created physical and moral powers; then the world as the work of God confronts thought under a very different aspect. The creation with man as its head has *become* the reality which it now is, and it is now in process of *becoming* what ultimately it is designed to be. It is not a finished but an unfinished work, a physico-ethical growth that to the eye of sense gives but uncertain intimations of the worth and glory of its ripe fruitage.

2. As fashioned in the beginning by the creative word, heaven and earth were *good*. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."¹ This beginning may even be pronounced perfect, but it was perfect only as the *beginning* of the realization of the world-idea, not perfect as a physico-ethical process, nor as a conclusion. The perfect beginning was the condition of an ideal process of evolution, of progress and transition, from one epoch, from one period to another. The perfect beginning, moreover, made it possible for the creature to

¹ Gen. i. 31.

reach the goal set by divine wisdom, and thus to become perfect in the absolute sense. But in the beginning the world was not in the absolute sense a perfect work; it never has been, it is not now; for the *normal* process of evolution and the *normal* transition through successive epochs were just as necessary as the relatively perfect beginning.

During the current intermediate eon whilst the world-scheme has not under its mature form become a reality and until its ultimate condition shall have been reached, we are confronted only by imperfect truth, only by a partial actualization of the divine idea. The world as it now stands is related to the world as it will be somewhat as the Abrahamic covenant or the Mosaic economy stands related to the kingdom of God founded by Jesus Christ. When we behold the heavens and the earth we are observing the types, and reading as it were the prophecies of the Old Testament. The glory of the truth, the perfection of wisdom, we see 'in a mirror darkly.' The phenomena, physical and ethical, above and around, which day by day we are seeing, which the scientist is collecting and classifying, are not properly the phenomena of God's creation. Present phenomena, like the temple of Solomon and its imposing ritual, seem to be continuous, established, grand; but they are only the shadowy figures¹ of world-truth noiselessly moving under the plastic touch of the divine Hand toward 'the fulness of time.'

3. Inasmuch as the cosmos is in the process of development and completion, the full significance of the wonderful beginning as set forth in Holy Scripture is and will be in abeyance during the current eon; it will fully come to light only when the ages of history shall have run their

¹ "A parable for the time now present." Heb. ix. 9.

course. Then the cosmos shall stand forth before the eye of 'the Father Almighty' in the final form of goodness and beauty.

So we think, so we judge, on analogous questions. Let us apply the method of reasoning used by our Lord. The world is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree; and the birds of 'heaven lodged in the branches thereof.'¹ It is the full grown tree with its spreading branches that reveals the original potencies of the mustard seed, not the tiny blade.² We judge the general period of childhood from the characteristic marks of children. But we can correctly judge of human nature only from the standpoint of mature manhood. The Hebrew nation had rich intimations of the glory of the Messianic age, but only the actual presence of the Messiah in the person of Jesus could qualify believing Jews rightly to interpret the types and prophecies of the pre-Christian economy. So now we may form a preliminary conception of the nature and design of God's work in creation from the shadowy phenomena of the transitional period of world-history to which we belong. Astronomy, geology and all natural sciences, if legitimately pursued, may aid us in gaining a definite perception of 'the blade,' perhaps of 'the ear' of the mighty Ygdrasil³ that God has planted,

¹ Luke xiii. 19.

² Mark iv. 28.

³ The ash-tree, *askr*, the sacred world-tree of Scandinavian mythology, which "binds together heaven, earth and hell. Its branches spread over the whole world and reach above the heavens." See Reidberg's *Teutonic Mythology*, p. 234; and Grimm's *Teutonic Mythology*, II. p. 796. Cf. *Georgics* 2, 290: "Altiùs ac penitùs terrae defigitur arbos;" and Pliny, 16, 31: 'Ygdrasil' is the Scandinavian product of an intuition which, when divested of its polytheistic character, may be seen to have rich cosmologic significance in sympathy with the profound eonic conception of the world pervading Christian revelation.

has watered and is cultivating; but a conception of 'the full corn in the ear,' natural science, whatever its discoveries have been or may yet be, cannot give us. A doctrine of the cosmos that shall answer truly and fully to its interior idea can be formed by human reason only in the light of the final cosmos, when the mighty 'tree' of God's planting shall be full grown. Then the work of God will in reality have become the work of God. The original design will be manifested according to the infinite riches of power, of love and wisdom, which the 'tree' is bearing potentially in its bosom.

If science will judge the cosmos only by present phenomena, ignoring the light which the microcosm in the person of the ideal Man sheds on its eonic movement towards an appointed goal when the design of its Author shall be fulfilled, it must necessarily fail of developing a doctrine answerable to objective truth, and may be compared to the man who should judge of the type and qualities of a 'seed' cast 'upon the earth,' not from 'the full corn in the ear,' but from the springing 'blade.'¹

§ 163.

Christian cosmology, however, forbids us to regard the present condition of the universe as normal. The current eon is not an ideal transitional period in its history, the normal process of development having been interrupted and disturbed by alien forces.

1. Whatever is contra-ideal in the moral and natural world is not an element of the world as by its Author designed and formed. Whilst it may be difficult to draw the line in sub-human realms between the ideal and the con-

tra-ideal, and therefore perhaps impossible at all points to distinguish phenomena of evil from phenomena of good, there is no room to question the fact of disturbance and radical antagonism. The present condition of things fails to proclaim unmixed goodness and ideal wisdom, a failure to which the sentiment of all civilized nations bears testimony.

The mystery of moral evil which when 'God finished His work' was only a possibility—a possibility in that the cosmos with man as its complement was endowed with relative autonomy—became actual, contrary to God's purpose. Internal disturbances of established order and of symmetrical movement have supervened. Antagonisms prevail in every kingdom. However natural reason reflecting in the light of its own intuitions and hypotheses may endeavor to account for it, the fact of disorder and evil is universally seen and acknowledged. Non-Christian scientists may decline to accept the term by which Christianity designates the cause of universal disorder and disproportion; but science has furnished no better. The contradictions of *sin* are universal phenomena. Reason can neither deny them, nor ignore the problem which they present. Moral evil and physical evil challenge philosophy at every turn. How shall the disorganization of nature and the miseries of history be reconciled with goodness and wisdom? Neither atheism nor agnosticism can escape the obligation of solving the question. God or no God, reason and conscience clamor for a solution. No solution has been given by science, nor by philosophy, nor by mythology. The theodicy of Leibnitz does not satisfy our moral consciousness.¹ From all sides the problem still

¹Martensen says that we should "renounce the unreasonable requirement, that already in the midst of time a *theodicy* shall be given

presses; for the sense of contrariety between the ideal and the real in nature is as profound and ineradicable as the sense of contradiction in conscience. On this question the universal judgment of mankind is in agreement with Christian consciousness.

If studied in the light of Christianity, the work of God as existing during the current eon is to be pronounced a caricature of God's idea. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain with us until now."

2. Present phenomena of the natural world can therefore not be normal. If we make due account of the fact of moral and physical evil, the utmost that can be conceded is that normal phenomena commingle with abnormal phenomena, that an ideal order is struggling against actual disorder. Whatever forces of good and of wisdom may be everywhere active, wisdom does not fulfil the ends of wisdom, and the good nowhere realizes the ideal of goodness. Of our religious life St. Paul says: "I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind."² So we may speak, *mutatis mutandis*, of the world as a whole; we see a different law in its kingdoms warring against the law of goodness and wisdom. It follows that the phenomena of the current eon are no adequate basis for a

us, that is, that God shall justify to us His government of the world, the ways of His providence, while we often forget how we ourselves are to be justified before God. We must familiarize ourselves with the thought, that so long as we only know a *fragment* of the divine government, and are not yet able to survey the connection between the whole and the individual, so long as we have not yet heard the 'prologue in heaven,'* many an inquiry must remain unanswered, and we must keep alive in us the consciousness that as against God's wisdom, our wisdom, even as against God's righteousness, our righteousness is ever wrong." Christian Ethics, Vol. II. p. 235.

¹ Rom. viii. 22.

² Rom. vii. 23.

* Job i.

final judgment respecting either the origin or the constitution, or the outcome and destiny of the cosmos.

If no disturbing forces had intervened, if the world were now moving onward in right relations to God and to itself, if all moral and physical phenomena were normal, even then the basis of a sound and comprehensive judgment would be but partial. We should have only 'the blade' or at most 'the ear,' from which to judge of 'the full corn in the ear.'

How much more insufficient are all observations and researches now since the phenomena of the world with which we are conversant are both inadequate and abnormal, being the manifestations as well of mighty perverting forces as of original laws.

A conception of man, of his nature, his possibilities and his ultimate perfection we form, not alone from the facts of history and the universal curse of death, but from the Son of Man, from His superiority to evil, His triumphs over death and His glorification. So of the whole creation we are now able to judge only approximately ; and an approximate judgment we can construct, not merely from the things we see and handle, but mainly in the light of Christian prophecy which amid prevailing darkness is illuminating the future eon when "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

CHAPTER IV.

DOCTRINE ON ANGELS.

[164.]

Man and sub-human kingdoms do not complete the conception of the cosmos. At several points reference has been made to an order of personal beings other than mankind. I proceed to inquire more particularly into their nature and relative position.

Angels are personal creatures called into existence by the originative Word before man, as an integrant part of the divine world-idea connected with the teleology and the conic movement of the cosmos at all its epochs.

Angels are individual spirits, each being presumably an immediate creation; but they exist in manifold classes, and may be regarded as organized into a kingdom different from the kingdom of man.

1. Christian cosmology must deny the speculations of gnosticism. Angels are not powers emanent from God, not secondary forms of divine existence. Nor are they independent beings; they do not carry in themselves the fountain of their life or the resources of their activity. Angelic sufficiency is of God, of God unchangeably. As they are not self-originant, so they are not capable of self-annihilation. The perpetuity of their existence does not turn on self-will. However mighty or exalted he may be, it is impossible for an archangel absolutely to break away from divine authority or from the teleology of the world.

2. Angels are creatures; their existence and office being conditioned by the freedom of divine will. They constitute one branch of the membership of the universe.

Angels share in the relatively independent selfhood of the cosmos, and are an organ of the world-idea, but not the noblest or most significant. In the organism of the world angels occupy an exalted, but subordinate, place—subordinate not only to God but also to the Son of Man.

What is man that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him but little lower than Elohim.¹

With their fidelity to their office, the world as a whole would not necessarily stand in its integrity; with their disobedience and unfaithfulness the world as a whole does not necessarily lapse into disorganization.

3. Angels are personal; ² each being endowed with rational and ethical qualities held in organic unity by the ego. Personality implies, at least in the incipient period of its history, that angels are capable of normal self-assertion for God or of abnormal self-assertion against God—capable of determining their history conformably or

¹ Ps. viii. 4, 5.

² Martensen says: "There are many sorts of spirits under the heavens, and for this very reason also many degrees of spirituality and spiritual independence; and we may therefore very properly assert that the angels are divided into classes." . . . "If we contemplate the angels in their relation to the conception of personality, we may say: there are powers, whose spirituality is so far from being independent, that they possess only a represented personality; in short, are only personifications. Of such a character are the tempests and flames, which execute the commands of the Lord." . . . "There exist other powers in the creation which possess a higher degree of spirituality, an intermediate state of existence between personification and personality. Under this category may be classed the spiritual powers in history, as for instance the spirits of nations and the deities of mythology." . . . "But if in this manner we find powers in history, which hover in the region lying between personality and personification, it is no less certain that revelation recognizes a third class of cosmical powers which constitute a free and personal spiritual kingdom." Christian Dogmatics, p. 131.

antagonistically to God's law.¹ In their relation to other kingdoms it may be said of them that they are capable of personal activity in accord with the moral order of the world, or of activity contrary to the moral and natural order. The life of angels is not the simple flow of existence, like the current of a stream, or the growth of an oak. Their life is spiritual life: either free obedience to the divine will, or wilful disobedience.

In either case whether they choose to do right or choose to do wrong, angels are continuously upheld agreeably to the type of individual organization, by immanent divine energy. God upholds them; He is active in them according to truth and righteousness. If they choose wrong, God remains true to the scheme and teleology of the world, upholding them according to the type and destiny of their being.

4. Though they are individual personalities, each presumably an immediate creation, angels are not isolated individuals. Among them there are objective distinctions, in virtue of which they exist in classes. The Scriptures speak of "legions of angels," of "thrones and dominions, principalities and powers in the heavens,"² also of "rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is named in the world which is to come." Paul in his epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and Peter in his

¹ They are πνεύματα, Heb. i. 4; have consciousness and experience joy, Luke xv. 7, 10, 21. They are predestined for obedience and blessedness, Ps. cxlviii. 2; and behold the face of the Father, Matt. xviii. 10. But knowledge and power are limited, Matt. xxiv. 36; Heb. i. 13, 14. They are capable of wrong-doing. Cf. Matt. xiii. 39; xxv. 41; II Cor. xi. 14.

² In many places Scripture speaks of angels as "the hosts of heaven," I King xxii. 19; Rev. xix. 14; also as "innumerable hosts of angels," Heb. xii. 22. A "host" is an organized army.

first epistle¹ plainly distinguish various classes, possessing different degrees of authority and power, all of whom are "made subject" to the glorified Son of Man. Angels differ in dignity of position; they differ in office, and consequently in the measure of their metaphysical endowments. Some are higher, others are lower on the scale of spiritual existence.²

If we reason by analogy from the known works of God, from animal life, and from the family of man, we are justified in assuming that manifold classes of angelic spirits constitute among themselves an organized whole. As we speak of an animal kingdom, and of a human kingdom, so we may speak of an angelic kingdom. Besides, there are many hints in Scripture which support the inference deducible from our knowledge of organized life. There are Cherubim,³ the witnesses of God's presence, and Seraphim,⁴ who seem to be the most exalted of the angelic host. There are archangels⁵ as well as angels. Gabriel is spoken of as standing "in the presence of God."⁶ Some occupy a relation of subordination to others. As each order acknowledges its chief, so all orders may be organized under some form of harmonious subordination to a single authoritative head.⁷

¹ Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16; I Peter iii. 22.

² Matt. xviii. 10. "God's *highest* angels represent the *least* subjects of His kingdom." Cf. Meyer on Eph. i. 21. "Angels," says Hooker, "are linked into a kind of corporation amongst themselves. . . . Consider the angels of God associated, and their law is that which disposeth them as an army, one in order and degree above another." Luke ii. 13; Matt. xxvi. 53; Heb. xii. 22. Ecc. Polity, Bk. I. iv. 2.

³ Ex. xxxvii. 8; Ps. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1; Ezek. xi. 22; Isa. xxxvii. 16.

⁴ Isa. vi. 2, 6.

⁵ I Thess. iv. 16; Jude 9.

⁶ Luke i. 19. Cf. Luke i. 26; Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21.

⁷ Boehl concedes the validity of the idea of organization, "das Moment der Ordnung," as he expresses it, "oder des ordnungsmäs-

5. No class of angels is a race. There being no difference of sex, angels are not, like man, endowed with the power of propagation. Angelic life is not a potentiality which may develop according to laws of generation, and realize itself in an indefinite multiplication of individuals. This opinion is not pure speculation. In reply to the Sadducees who approached our Lord with a question on the resurrection of the dead with which they expected to put Him to confusion: "In the resurrection therefore whose wife shall she be of the seven?" He said unto them: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven."¹ In the absence of all teaching of a different character this utterance of our Lord, recorded by two Evangelists, is a basis for the maintenance of the opinion that every individual angel like every class is the immediate creation of God.²

6. The hints and representations of Scripture support the belief that angels were created, and had developed a history before man. The epoch of rebellion by which the kingdom of darkness began to be antedates the beginning of the human race;³ but at what stage in the progress of creation angels appear, or at what epoch some angels 'sinned,' and were 'committed to pits of darkness,' Christian cosmology is unable to assert.⁴

sigen Einerschreitens. Gott hat die Engel von vornherein nach einer gewissen Ordnung erschaffen." *Dogmatik*, p. 147.

¹ Matt. xxii. 28-30; Mark xii. 25. Cf. Luke xx. 36.

² Ebrard remarks that nowhere in Scripture do we discover the least trace of female angelic beings. *Christian Dogmatics*, I, § 236.

³ II Peter ii. 4.

⁴ Augustine lays no stress on the question whether angelic creation antedates the first 'day,' of Genesis, but includes angels in his interpretation of 'the beginning.' He says: Where Scripture speaks of the world's creation, it is not plainly said whether or when the angels

There are however some interesting questions of speculation which suggest themselves: did the entire host come into existence simultaneously? or were there successive acts of angelic creation? Has the creation of angels ceased? or is the number increasing from age to age? Anselm and other medieval theologians supposed that the human race was formed to compensate for the apostasy from the hosts of holy angels.¹ Reflecting on the line of this supposition, is it legitimate to assume that after countless angels had 'sinned,' other spiritual beings were called into existence to take their places? Or may we suppose that the number of personal beings in the heavenly sphere is by the creative Word continually increasing like the multiplication of individual persons and of nationalities in the history of the human family on earth?

Such questions are legitimate; but as they belong to the region of pure speculation it is not in place here to pursue them.

7. As compared with man, angels are incorporeal. The term *incorporeal* is used to deny only that angels have a material organization akin to the organization of the human

were created; but if mention of them is made, it is implicitly under the name of 'heaven,' when it is said: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." City of God, XI. ix. 9.

¹ Milton has the same thought:

"But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried."

Paradise Lost, Bk. VII.

body; no more. It is not philosophical, I may add not scriptural, to deny of them organic embodiment.

It is a law of created spirit to exist in a determinate spiritual form. Spirit generates a sphere which it inhabits. As in man and in lower cycles of life, so in the organization of angelic personalities we distinguish between the interior type and the exterior mode of existence.

Even of God we do not think as formless. The Bible does not so represent the divine Being. Says the Psalmist:

Thou art clothed with honor and majesty,
Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment.¹

To the Jews our Lord says of the Father—‘Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.’² Besides, the conception is common to nearly all New Testament writers that God dwells eternally in His own ‘glory.’ It is also in place to bear in mind the central fact of Christianity: the most perfect manifestation of God’s essential nature as absolute Spirit is the Logos incarnate in the person of the Son of Man. Man’s form, or ‘the likeness of men,’³ is the revelation of the being of God. True, the perfect revelation is in the form of man glorified in heaven; but that perfect glorification includes the spiritual body of His humanity. The perfection of the self-manifestation of absolute Spirit in the person of the Son of Man glorified is not formless.

There is accordingly no scriptural basis for the opinion that because angels are spiritual they have no determinate mode of existence. It is consonant with biblical teaching

¹ Ps. civ. 2.

² John v. 37. Compare the first chapter of Ezekiel where the *appearance* of the likeness of the glory of God, seen by Ezekiel, is fully described. Bengel.

³ Phil. ii. 7.

to hold that, inasmuch as they are finite personal spirits, they exist in a definite form of organization, an organization answerable to the substance and law of their finite being. They are not supertemporal nor superspatial.¹

But the finite constitution of angels is not organically bound up with the human race, nor with the sub-human kingdoms of the existing mundane economy. Angels live in sympathy with man, or they may cherish antipathy to man; sub-human kingdoms may be accessible to them and to their influence; their influence may be in accord with the normal order of things, or it may be antagonistic to the normal order; but there is no reason to believe that, like man, angelic spirits are concretely inwoven with the economy of nature.

§ 165.

From the fact that angels are incorporeal and were created before man, or that they are members of a spiritual kingdom, it does not follow that as to essence they are a higher order of personal existences, or that they have a nobler destiny. There are strong reasons supporting the doctrine that in the ideal economy of the cosmos the status of angels is subordinate to the status of man.

1. Man is a physico-spiritual being, organically uniting in his constitution body and soul. The body is not, as has frequently been taught, a clog to the soul or a degradation of manhood, or the infliction of a penalty.² It is an ele-

¹ Ebrard says: "Dasz die Engel einen materiellen Leib hätten, läsz sich ebensowenig beweisen, als, dasz sie leiblos seien. Das steht nur als Grenze fest, dasz wenn sie auch leiblos sie doch nicht raumlos sind, d. h. dasz sie nicht auszer den Schranken der Räumlichkeit-ewig-erkennen und handeln, sondern im Raum und beschränkt, welches auch denkbar ist." Christian Dogmatik, I. § 235.

² John Scotus Erigena regarded the bodily constitution of man as a result of sin. Hagenbach's *History of Doctrine*, § 173.

ment of dignity, a condition of spiritual vitality. Conjoining body and soul in indissoluble unity, man is connected with two worlds. On the one side, bodily organization binds human life, human personality, with matter, with all the forces and processes of nature backward to its beginnings. On the other side, spiritual life allies man to the pre-mundane dominion of Spirit. Connected with the heavenly realm and with the economy of earth, his constitution qualifies him to be the mediator between the infinite and the finite, between the heavenly and the earthly, the material and the spiritual, the representative of God in His relations to the world, the organ of the world in its relations to God. Revelation does not accord this position of dignity to any order of angelic spirits. Martensen firmly supports this judgment. He says:

"Although the angel, in relation to man, is the more powerful spirit, man's spirit is nevertheless the richer and the more comprehensive. For the angel in all his power is only the expression of a single one of all those phases which man in the inward nature of his soul, and the richness of his own individuality, is intended to combine into a complete and perfect microcosm." . . . "It is precisely because the angels are only spirits, not souls, that they cannot possess the same rich existence as man, whose soul is the point of union in which spirit and nature meet."¹

If the question be raised whether such representation of the superior dignity of man is warranted by facts of experience, it must be conceded that a satisfying argument cannot be drawn from the actual history of the Adamic race. The divine idea of man was never realized by any nation,

¹ Martensen's *Dogmatics*, pp. 132, 133. Dorner is not disposed to accept the superiority of the human race to angelic orders; nor on the other hand does he take a firm stand against this opinion. See *Christian Dogmatics*, I. p. 539 and II. p. 428. Delitzsch concurs with Martensen. In his *Commentary on Psalms* viii. 6, he says that man assumes a "somewhat superangelic position in virtue of the fact that spirit and matter are united in him."

or any individual. The argument supporting the superior dignity of man as a physico-ethical being, especially the high functions and spiritual possibilities of *the body*, are to be drawn from the history and enthronement of 'the last Adam.' The ideal 'Man' realizes the possibilities and fulfils the office of the human body as He does of the human soul.

2. The Adamic race is formed in the image of God. In this fact there is a profounder depth of meaning than has yet been discerned by metaphysic or definitely acknowledged by Christian anthropology. Divine imageship is the unseen, intangible type of human personality, the significance of which as determining man's intrinsic worthiness and divine aptitudes comes into light only in the degree that his godlike life approaches the final goal of normal development.

Angels do the will of God; they reflect divine attributes; but if we study the comparative worth of angelic life and human life as portrayed by Holy Scripture, it becomes evident that angels have not, like man, the capability of enthronement at the right hand of God, nor do they, like man, possess fitness to be judges of the world at the great day of final consummation.¹ It is a distinguishing characteristic of New Testament teaching that the Father has given authority to the Mediator to execute judgment, not be-

¹ "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" I Cor. vi. 3. "That *angels* themselves shall come within the sphere of the judicial activity of glorified believers, is stated here as a proposition established to the believing consciousness of the readers,—a proposition, the ground for which is to be found in the fact that in Christ, whose glorified saints will reign with Him, is given the absolute truth and the absolute right, and consequently the highest judicial court of resort, even as regards the world of angels, from the jurisdiction of which not even the loftiest of created beings can be excepted." Meyer.

cause He is the Son of God, but "because He is the Son of Man."¹

3. The principal reason for the opinion that the spirit of man is a higher order of personal existence than the spirit of angels is afforded by the exaltation of the Son of Man. The glorification of Jesus invests humanity with a dignity superior to the position of all other orders of personal beings. He who has the very nature of man, "of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary,"² shares with the Father the possession of divine glory, seated at His right hand in the heavenly places; He is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.³ Paul moreover declares that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.⁴ This supreme homage is done the Mediator, not only because He is God of God, but because He is also Man of man, because He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore it was that God highly exalted Jesus of Nazareth and gave Him the Name which is above every name.

The objection that to accord to man an eminence of wisdom, knowledge and power so exalted contradicts the opinion which non-Christian scientists hold concerning man has no force in presence of *Christological* thought; for

¹ John v. 27. "This man saves men: this man judges men." Bengel. Godet says: "The judgment of humanity is a homage rendered to the holiness of God; but this homage, in order really to make reparation for the outrage committed, must proceed from the race itself which has committed the offence. Judgment, in this view, is exactly on the same line with expiation, of which it serves as the complement."

² Heidelberg Catechism, 35. ³ Eph. i. 21. ⁴ Phil. ii. 10, 11.

Christianity discloses new truth respecting man as really as new truth respecting God.

It must be borne in mind that the perfecting virtue of Christianity does no violence to human nature; a principle that applies to the exaltation of Jesus as it does to His organic union with God by conception and birth. Enthronement in heaven does not superadd anything foreign to the human constitution. Instead, His enthronement reveals an *original* aptitude of human nature, by virtue of which man in union with the Son of God is qualified to rise from earth to heaven, and in heaven to occupy a position which is 'far above every name that is named.' Of such exaltation and glorification no angel is capable.¹ If man as man were not by his creation in the image of God endowed with a capacity of enthronement in heaven, this enthronement, supposing it to have been possible would have been a wrong done to human nature.

4. It is presumable that there may be a series of orders of spiritual beings, rising from the lower to the higher in the heavenly realm, corresponding to a succession of grades of existence in the earthly realm. On earth there are rungs in the ladder of existence; the succession ascending from the mineral to the plant, from the plant to the animal, and from the animal to man. It may be that the gradation on the earthly side reflects a gradation on the heavenly side. There may be circles of angelic spirits, one rising in dignity and power above another, all subordinate to Him who sits on the mediatorial throne in the image of

¹ "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in His throne." Rev. iii. 21. "The throne of Jesus is the throne of God." Dr. Wm. Milligan. We have no intimation in Scripture of a like prospect for angels.

God. This view gives man as perfected in the Son of Man a headship over all the kingdoms of earth and over the heavenly world—a headship which is rooted in the eternal divine idea of the universe, and has been actualized in the ascension and glorification of Jesus of Nazareth.

5. To the superior dignity of man there are several objections that deserve notice: 1. Adam was overcome by the Tempter, symbolized by the serpent; 2. the fallen posterity of Adam is now subject to the dominion of Satan, an apostate angel; 3. good angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation.

These facts do not contradict the opinion that man intrinsically has a dignity superior to the dignity of angels. It may be true that the first man as fashioned by the creative word had less wisdom and less will-power than an archangel. This is consonant with human nature. As a physico-ethical being he begins his history on a relatively lower plane. "Man," as the translator of Rothe expresses it, "is the only creature which, as created, does not correspond to its own conception, and which is therefore self-contradictory. This self-contradiction is necessary, because it lies in the principle of man's being to become conformable to his conception only by his own personal action."¹ The realization of his intrinsic dignity involves a process of development, both ethical and physical. Exaltation, or the fulfilment of the divine purpose, was the ultimate destiny, not the incipient stage of man's existence. This ultimate end it was his mission to fulfil by faithfulness to his trust, by obedience to the divine will—the law of his normal history.

The present low estate of the Adamic race, the "horri-

¹ Rothe's *Still Hours*, p. 147.

ble pit," as the Psalmist describes it, is not to be denied.¹ But this low estate is the consequence of self-falsification. It does not argue a lower order of spirit, but a perversion of spirit. Man's subjection to the kingdom of evil is a violation of his nature and ideal relations.

The third objection assumes that it is only a higher order of personal spirit that can minister to the needs of men. Can this assumption stand? May not a lower order minister to the needs of a higher order? Did not angels minister to the incarnate Son in the wilderness, and in Gethsemane? Angelic ministrations pre-suppose the humiliation of the Son during His earthly history; not inferiority as to personality, or as to ultimate exaltation.

§ 166.

The nature, character and office of angels have been manifested by a progressive series of revelations, running parallel with the revelation of God in the economy of redemption as developed by history and reflected in the Old and New Testament. Angels are not merely spectators of the work of creation nor of the progress of God's new creating and redeeming love; nor are angels the uninterested servants of the divine will. The progress of revelation in creation and in providence, especially in the history of grace, indirectly affects their life and condition.

1. Angels witnessed the formation of the heavens and the earth. To them the advancing work of God was a manifestation of wisdom and goodness. The evolution of time-worlds by which the Creator brought to view new glories of the cosmos was the condition of blessing. Of the nature of this blessing, which came to them

¹ Ps. xl. 2.

through the progress of the creative work, angelology is able to speak only in general terms. If the formation of the heavens and the earth was the cause of rejoicing, the cosmos must have been to them a good, a display of the Godhead that was new. It is written :

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth ?

When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy ?¹

Here, as elsewhere throughout the Old Testament, "sons of God" designates angelic spirits. Evidently they are represented as in sympathy with God's creating activity. The cosmos rising like a temple upon its foundations before them was to their vision an object sublime and glorious.

2. In history angels come to view in close connection with the covenant of grace. As the covenant unfolds its import, advancing in strength and in the display of Messianic purpose from one epoch to another, angels appear in a character and manifest spiritual qualities that become more and more definite.

Messengers from the Lord come prominently into the foreground during the life of Abraham.² Three men stood over against him, as he sat in the tent-door in the heat of day ; they sympathize with him ; they declare God's electing love, and pronounce His judgments. The judgment of God upon Sodom they execute.³ God sends " His

¹ Job xxxviii. 7.

"The creation of the earth is likened to the rearing of a great edifice, whose extent was determined by line, whose pillars were sunk in their bases, and its corner-stone laid with shoutings and songs of rejoicing among the heavenly hosts (comp. Ezra iii. 10)." Book of Job by the Rev. A. B. Davidson, D. D., LL. D., p. 262.

² Gen. xviii. 1, *et seq.*

³ Gen. xix.

angel before" the servant of Abraham, whom He commands to return to his country and his kindred, and take a wife for his son Isaac.¹

In connection with the life of Abraham angels appear under a twofold character, as messengers of blessing and of punishment. They are co-workers with God in the announcement of His Messianic promises and in guiding the progress of Messianic history. This seems to be the central significance of their spiritual character. Divine judgments executed by them express the condemnation of Jehovah upon men for their wickedness in despising and resisting the revelation of Messianic love.

3. After the time of Abraham, at every epoch in Messianic history, angels are seen closely connected with the progressive manifestation of Jehovah in the unfolding of the covenant. They are active in the call of Moses, in the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, in the giving of the Ten Commandments, and the institution of the ceremonial law.²

Angels are inwoven with the entire subsequent history of the Israelites; inciting them to obedience and to faithfulness, restraining them from wickedness and from unfaithfulness to the covenant, and inflicting condign punishments upon individuals and upon nations.

4. Most significant of all is the Angel of Jehovah, called also Angel of the Covenant. He does not only fulfil the general functions ascribed to angels, he not only carries into execution God's purposes of deliverance and judgment; but he is, moreover, the chief organ of the Covenant-God through whom He leads and protects His chosen people. Hence the Angel of Jehovah occupies

¹ Gen. xxiv. 7.

² Gal. iii. 19.

a peculiar relation to Israel and to the Theocracy.¹ He is distinguished as the medium through whom Jehovah reveals Himself in the use of external words, words addressed to the ear. Above all, he is the organ of manifestation when Jehovah reveals Himself under forms addressing the bodily senses. The outward form may be a symbol, such as a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and a pillar of cloud before the camp of Israel,² or it is the figure of man, as when three men came to Abraham sitting in the door of his tent.³ One represents Jehovah, who is distinguished from the two called angels sent by Jehovah.⁴

The Angel of the Lord is not to be regarded either as an uncreated person, as to essence Godlike, or as an ordinary angel sent forth from God as His messenger. As regards his nature he is to be classified with the order of created angelic spirits. Not unfrequently he distinguishes himself from Jehovah, and does this after a manner which definitely emphasizes the contrast between Jehovah, to whom alone divine adoration is due, and himself as a created being.⁵ On the other hand, however, he is the *organ* of Jehovah's personal self-manifestation, and

¹ Cf. Gen. xlviii. 16; Ex. xxiii. 20, *et seq.*; Gen. xxxii. 24; Num. xx. 16; Joshua v. 13; Judges v. 23; Isa. xxxvii. 36; Zech. i. 12, *et seq.*

² Ex. iii. 2; xiv. 19.

³ Gen. xviii. 2.

⁴ On Gen. xix. 16, 17. Delitzsch says: "Jahveh, speaking by the angels, invites Lot to save himself by hastening straight onward. 'And it came to pass when they (the angels) had led them (Lot and his family) forth, He (Jahveh) said: escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the plain; escape to the mountain, that thou be not consumed.' (v. 17). Jahveh is in the two angels, as in the three: they are all three messengers, that is, organs of God present in them, as the apostles were messengers and organs of Christ present in them." Comm. on Gen. II. p. 55.

⁵ Gen. xxii. 16; Judges vi. 12; xiii. 16; Zech. i. 12. Cf. Ex. xxiii. 20; xxxiii. 2, *et seq.*

commonly he is to such degree the organ that his own personality disappears behind the personality of Jehovah ; the appearance of the Angel being represented as the visible presence of Jehovah Himself.¹ Through the inhabitation of God, the Angel of the Lord is for the time filled with the divine fulness.

Jehovah may, indeed, and does use *any* angel to be the organ of personal manifestation. Hence it comes that he who at times performs this office is indefinitely spoken of as "an angel." Commonly, however, the angel in whose appearance Jehovah presents Himself to view is a particular Angel, one who occupies the highest rank, the prince of the heavenly host.²

Studied in the light of the New Testament, the Angel of the Lord is to be regarded as a type of the Son of God, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead.³

5. A higher style of manifestation meets us in the connection of angels with the central epoch of history. Recognizing the purpose of Old Testament revelation, the true intent of the ceremonial law and the wisdom of the incarnation, angels are active in bringing about the transition from the old order to the new order, from the prophetic shadow of the new creation to the substantive fact. At points in the earthly history of Jesus angels are prominent as co-workers. The angel Gabriel proclaims to Zacharias, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, the birth of a son, pronounces his name, and declares his mission : He shall go before the face of the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah.

¹ Gen. xvi. 10.

² Joshua v. 14, *et seq.* Cf. Zech. i. 11; with verses 8, 10.

³ See *Alttestamentliche Theologie* von D. Ed. Riehm, § 41, from which the substance of the paragraphs on the Angel of Jehovah has been appropriated.

Gabriel makes the announcement to the Virgin Mary : Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God, and behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shalt be called the Son of the Most High. . . . and of His kingdom there shall be no end.¹

An angel proclaims to the shepherds keeping watch by night over their flock the good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people : For there is born to you this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.²

An angel appears to Joseph in a dream, and bids him flee into Egypt with the young child and His mother, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him.

Two years later an angel appears in a dream to Joseph, in Egypt, and commands him to take the young child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead that sought the young child's life. In the helpless babe of Bethlehem angels see the Son of the Most High, the Heir to the throne of David, a Saviour who is the Christ. This child is to them the great joy, inspiring thanksgiving and praise : glory to God in the highest.

In entire accord with their watchful care over the young child and His mother is the sympathy of angels with Jesus during His ministry, especially at every solemn crisis of His mediatorial work. Angels minister to Him when tempted of the devil in the wilderness. In the dark hour of His agony in Gethsemane there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him.

Angels participate in the triumphs of His resurrection; they bear testimony to His prophetic word : remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, say-

¹ Luke i. 19, 30. Comp. Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21. ² Luke ii. 11

ing that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.¹

5. Equally evident is the devotion of angels to the kingdom of God after the ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They are active co-workers with the apostles and evangelists in planting the Church among Jews and Gentiles. According to the record in Acts they appear time and again, especially at important junctures, and always as fellow-laborers with the ambassadors of Christ in the work of establishing and extending the kingdom.

A thoughtful study of the gospels and the Acts brings prominently to view the fact of the existence of angels, their faithful devotion to the incarnate Son, their interest in the recovery of this world from the miseries of sin, their divine intelligence, their spiritual wisdom, and their watchful activity in the service of the kingdom. The central object of their love and fidelity is Jesus Christ. In their connection with His birth and earthly history, with His death and resurrection, and with the planting of His church, we have the most definite revelation of their personality and righteous character. Of this definite revelation the "fulness of the time"² is the condition. When God becomes man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, it becomes possible for good angels to assert, unfold and manifest under approximately ideal forms, their life, their knowledge, their holiness. During the advancing stages of pre-Christian history this high order of angelic revelation did not obtain, because the necessary conditions did not exist.

6. The representations of the character and of the inti-

¹ Luke xxiv. 6, 7.

² Gal. iv. 4.

mate connection of angels with believers in the apostolic age is typical of their presence and activity during the subsequent history of the Church. There is warrant for the belief that good angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation.¹ It is not idle fancy to believe that as at the birth of Jesus, at His agony, at His resurrection, so at every solemn juncture in the history of the Church, "which is His body,"² at every important epoch in the lives of individual ambassadors and individual members, angels are present; that they interpose in behalf of the right, in the interest of Christian life, the welfare of the individual, and the honor of the Church; that they interpose after a manner that is angelic, not earthly, but super-earthly, and always in a way suitable to the needs of the individual believer and the Church as a whole.³ Their agency, like the mighty work of the Holy Spirit, is invisible to the bodily eye, and unintelligible to 'the natural man;' but for this reason the sympathetic ministration of angels is not less worthy of the confidence of Christian people.

§ 167.

The final revelation of angels coincides with the Second Advent. The consummation of the kingdom will perfect their life, their knowledge, and their blessedness.

I. In the end the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him. He shall send forth His

¹ Heb. i. 14. Angels "*minister* before God; *are sent*, abroad, to men. Both are opposed to *sitting at the right hand*." Bengel. Cf. Luke i. 19.

³ Barrow says: "They all do tenderly love the pious person; they are ever ready to serve and do him good, to protect him from danger, to aid him in his undertakings, to rescue him from mischiefs." Works, Vol. I. p. 27.

angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity.¹ In the apocalyptic visions of John the angels are messengers and co-workers. The oriental imagery whereby impending events and final events of the Church are projected, pictures them as participating agents, active for the triumph of the kingdom and in the execution of divine judgments. In these prospective transactions conditioned on the Second Advent, we see the final evidence of their wisdom, their spiritual power, their willing subordination to the Son of Man as 'head over all things to the Church.'²

2. Though angels are gifted with a high order of divine intelligence and are fitted to be active co-workers with the Son of Man in His relation to the Last Things of the Messianic kingdom, yet their knowledge is finite and their spiritual life perfectible. To them the Person and mediatorial work of Jesus Christ are mysteries. Unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places is made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God. So St. Paul teaches.³ But 'principalities and powers' do not fathom or measure this 'manifold wisdom.' Speaking of the things which have been announced unto 'the elect' through them that preached the Gospel by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven, Peter says: "which things angels desire to look into;"⁴ implying that 'these things' which

¹ Matt. xxv. 31; xiii. 41, 49.

² Eph. i. 23.

³ Eph. iii. 10.

⁴ I Peter i. 12. Says Archbishop Leighton: "The angels look upon what they have seen already fulfilled with delight and admiration; and what remains, namely, the full accomplishment of this great work in the end of time, they look upon, with desire to see it finished; it is not a slight glance they take of it, but they fix their eye, and look steadfastly on it, namely, that mystery of godliness, *God manifested in the flesh*: and it is added, *seen of angels*, I Tim. iii. 16." Works, p. 39. Cf. Prof. S. D. L. Salmond, M. A., *in loco*, Schaff's Commentary.

by the Holy Spirit had been preached, namely "the salvation of which even outcast Gentiles are participants," were matters of profound interest to the angels, but by them were only partially apprehended. Angels have knowledge enough to awaken wonder and inspire adoration; but their capacity of insight into Christianity is in some respects like the spiritual capacity of men. Their powers are not equal to the task of measuring 'the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge'—a love which passeth the knowledge of angels as really as the knowledge of men. Doubtless angels know much more of redemption than 'this world' knows, much more than the vast majority of ordinary Christians; but if through the *Church* 'the manifold wisdom of God' is made known 'unto the principalities and the powers in heavenly places,' and if angels have a desire 'to look into' the things which the apostles preached to Jews and Gentiles, it becomes a question whether angels have a clearer insight into the import of the Christian mysteries than the inspired apostles or the most gifted teachers of the Church?

3. The spiritual knowledge of angels has not reached the measure of perfection; it is still progressive, advancing with the growth of the kingdom in the earthly and post-earthly period of its development. Moreover, the *position* occupied by angels relatively to the Mediator and the growth of the kingdom is not now final; it will become more exalted at the Second Coming, when the end of the incarnation shall be fully accomplished. The unsearchable riches of Christ, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise through the Gospel—this mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God, is even now made known by

the Church, though she is imperfect and militant, unto the principalities in the heavenly regions as the manifold wisdom of God. Emphasis is put by the apostle on the fact that unto principalities God's wisdom is made known *through the Church*.¹ The existence of the Church, and the preaching of the unsearchable riches by the Church, condition the growth of the angels in spiritual knowledge. How much more of Christian truth will not the 'principalities' know when the Church, now imperfect, shall attain to perfection; now militant, warring against enemies both human and diabolical, shall become the Church triumphant?

4. The final consummation at the Second Coming will affect not only the relative position and the spiritual knowledge of the angels, but Scripture suggests that the final consummation will likewise affect the *life* of the angels. Indirectly at least, they will participate in the spiritual benefits which come to the Church from the Son of Man. Paul teaches that God the Father made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in the Beloved unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth.¹ Both the human race upon the earth and the angelic orders in the heavens are embraced in 'all things' to be summed up in Christ. Angelic spirits will then bear a relation to the

¹ Eph. iii. 9, 10. Says Otto von Gerlach: "by the revelation of Himself in Christ, by the institution of the Christian Church on earth, God after a manner hitherto unknown glorifies Himself before the heavenly principalities. They who until now had, filled with awe, been praising Him for the wonder of creation, now see His wisdom glorified in a new form in the Christian communion through the manifold ways by which lost men are saved. Entirely new and inexhaustible wealth of divine wisdom was manifested in redemption." See Rom. xi. 33-36.

² Eph. i. 9, 10.

Head of the Church which they do not bear to Him now, and which they will not realize before 'the fulness of the time.'

Of similar import is the prophetic vision of Paul in Eph. i. 20. It was the good pleasure of the Father through the Son to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heaven. Things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through the Son, and unto the Son. Accordingly all angelic orders exist for the Son; He is their *end*. In the Son these orders of spirits consist, hold together; He is the law by which they are upheld and governed. Having made peace between God and men, between Gentiles and Jews through the blood of His cross, He becomes also for the angels a Mediator through whom their life passes from its present plane to a higher plane of spiritual perfection and glory.

The kingdom of the Son of Man comprehends all orders of angelic spirits no less than all races of mankind. When the impending transcendent eon now in process of ripening shall supersede the current eon, angels as a consequence of the glorification of the body mystical will rise into more intimate fellowship with the fountal Source of life, of light, and love. But though as to their life and knowledge advanced to a higher status of spiritual perfection through the Church, yet in the final glory of the kingdom the position and office of the angels will be subordinate to the authority and office of the saints.

CHAPTER V.

GOOD AND EVIL ANGELS.

§ 168.

The Christian doctrine of God requires us to affirm that, like the primeval family of man, the principalities and powers in the heavenly regions were created good, ethically and physically. The constitution of every angelic order actualized the divine purpose in its incipient period. It is no less logical also to maintain that the conditions of fidelity to God and of growth in moral and physical excellence, were adequate to their needs. No principle of evil, either natural or moral, and no abnormal nor deficient conditions were given by the original constitution or by any relation of personality to the primitive state of the cosmos. Evil begins in the sphere of created personality.

1. Theology may indeed never be able to solve the problem concerning the metaphysical origin of evil. But as God is the absolute Good, the author only of the good, cosmology must at least go so far as to take a firm negative position regarding the relation of God to evil. God is in no sense, directly or indirectly, the author either of the sinful principle in fallen angels or of actual moral antagonism among His creatures.

The possibility of moral evil was necessarily given with the autonomy of angelic personality. Angels were called into existence to fulfil a divine purpose, a purpose the realization of which was conditioned on the self-determination of the creature as really as on the will of the Creator. But the ideal possibility of failure was not a germ of evil;

it was the potential beginning of a free and continuous harmony between God and angels, and between all orders of angels.

2. The original ethical goodness of angels was only the beginning of their history. Whether their history would fulfil the high purpose of their existence was a conditional issue, an issue which turned on the ideal use of creaturely freedom. In the beginning their personal condition may be described as a state of *probation*. The ability, physical and ethical, requisite to stand in the goodness of God, and fulfil their history agreeably to the divine will they had; being formed with the faculty and the pre-disposition to do the right, and the right only. Yet it was perpetually necessary to will the truth and do the truth.

A moral problem meets angelic spirits on the threshold of their existence. Will the potential become actual? Will they steadily affirm God as the only law of life? Will the true, the good and the beautiful be developed by them into noblest forms of perfection?

Whether or not angels would be faithful to their vocation and fulfil the end of their creation was a problem that could not be arbitrarily solved by a divine decree; nor could the positive purpose of God in creating them be accomplished by the exertion of wisdom and power. The angels had been constituted *personal* beings; God had endowed them with relative autonomy; concerning them therefore God had no will but that which was compatible with angelic freedom; He could put upon them no might of restraint that would contravene the law of created personality. The notion that by the exercise of infinite wisdom and power God might render failure or wrong-doing impossible assumes that the divine will in the government

of angels may contradict the divine will immanent in their ethical constitution.

The issue foreordained by God, the purpose by Him decreed, was the goodness and blessedness of angelic spirits; but whether His foreordination would be actualized in their history depended on the continuous and uninterrupted full response of angelic freedom to divine foreordination. Uninterrupted positive response of freedom was necessarily the condition of foreordained freedom and goodness.

3. The probation of angelic spirits is peculiar to their heavenly state; and must be distinguished from the probation of the primeval family of man. Moral evil did not exist. Physical evil did not exist; there were no contra-ideal forces active in chaos or in their physical relations. Rightly construed, angelic probation does not suppose temptation, using the word in the sense in which it must be applied to the human race. There was no solicitation to wrong-doing from without. The supposition of temptation is excluded by the conditions of the question. In this respect the probation of man whom a kingdom of evil antedated and whom this kingdom assailed from without, was specifically different.

If the word *temptation* be applied to the angelic world in its original condition, the term must be used consistently with the fundamental truth that the world as fashioned by the word of God was good, exclusively good. The word will have to denote only that which obtains within the domain of truth and righteousness. Temptation is reducible to the ideal possibility of doing the right or of not doing the right. Any real solicitation to will the false or to do the wrong under any form there could not be. The ideal possibility of not doing the divine will is only the

negative aspect of created autonomy. The doing of the good implies the choice of the good, the self-determination of the will by which the good is embraced and appropriated.

I. GOOD ANGELS.

§ 169.

Good angels are they in whom the potential became actual. The autonomy of personality asserted itself normally, embracing the positive truth of freedom. The ideal possibility of not choosing the good did not become real in false self-assertion.

1. Angels passed from the condition of spontaneous goodness to actual goodness, or to self-determined righteousness, by the exercise of the will, by the use of personal freedom according to the law of God. In obeying the law of God they were at the same time active in harmony with the law of their own constitution. God was for them the absolute Good. By fulfilling His law they by their own act embraced the Good; and by embracing the Good they appropriated divine Good to themselves. Constitutionally good, angels became personally good by self-determined union and communion with the absolute Good. The ethical consequence of such self-determination and normal activity was that their normal strength was unfolded and confirmed. They became righteous by doing righteousness, and holy by realizing the ideal of holiness in the positive freedom of personality.

2. As the potential became actual, as by choosing and doing the Good, angels were confirmed in goodness, the ideal possibility of not choosing the good ceased to prevail. It was superseded. Freedom grew towards ideal perfection. The very act of self-determination conformably

to divine law transcended the negative possibility of freedom; transcended it, in that so far forth as they were freely active in the way of obedience, living in the communion of divine love, any kind or degree of disobedience was excluded. Continuous self-assertion according to God superseded the possibility of abnormal self-assertion. They could not become self-centered when by uninterrupted choosing of the absolute Good their life was centered in God. Moving by the exercise of freedom in their ideal orbit around their central Sun, they were by the might of goodness held in that orbit.

The confirmation of angels in righteousness and holiness was the consequence of the free communion of love with God, a communion in which we have to recognize two factors, divine activity and angelic activity; a communication, on the one hand, from the bosom of the Godhead to the spiritual life of angels, and on the other the necessary moral effect of angelic obedience. These factors are reciprocally conditional. Communications of love to them anticipate constant responsive action, the opening of the soul to the nutritive inflowing of divine good; the self-appropriation by angels of divine good not only develops their moral strength, but also qualifies them for richer communications from God. As from age to age this reciprocal communion of love prevails and is perfected, good angels are so filled and advanced by the genius of righteousness and holiness, that it may be said of them that they have completely transcended the possibility of becoming evil.¹

¹Says Augustine: "Let none doubt that the holy angels in their heavenly abode are, though not, indeed, co-eternal with God, yet secure and certain of eternal and true felicity." *City of God*, Bk. XI. 33. Hooker says: "God which moveth mere natural agents as an

If we recognize the free interaction of these two factors we may rise above mechanical or arbitrary theories of angelic goodness. Angels did not become confirmed in righteousness because of a supposed decree of God to that effect, a decree operating on them from without, irresistibly constraining obedience from without, and rendering false self-assertion impossible. Nor did they come to stand firm in the truth of God merely by the virtue of an ethical process of self-perfection. They were not self-sufficient. Assuming that the resources of normal development were at hand in their original condition, we have to emphasize the divine action of love as the primary condition of confirmed angelic righteousness no less than the necessity of the free appropriation of divine gifts by their personal activity.

II. EVIL ANGELS.

§ 170.

Angels constitutionally good may become evil, ethically and physically. Evil angels are those in whom potential goodness did not become actual goodness. The ethical failure was the consequence of abnormal self-assertion.

1. Two assumptions are possible. Either some angels when they began to be personally active forthwith failed to abide in the communion of love with God; or although in the incipient stage of development they became personally active according to God, they did not get beyond

efficient only, doth otherwise move His holy angels: for beholding the face of God, (Matt. xviii. 10) and being rapt with the love of His beauty, they cleave inseparably forever unto Him. Desire to resemble Him in goodness maketh them unwearable and even unsatiable in their longing to do by all means all manner of good unto all the creatures of God, but especially unto the children of men." Bk. I. iv. 1.

the incipient stage of active righteousness; and so did not attain to the status of confirmation in positive holiness. The positive power of freedom was not continuously asserted. Instead the ideal possibility of doing the right or not doing the right, of choosing or not choosing the good, became reality in the character of wrong. Instead of freely obeying the law of God and the law of their ethical life, thereby abiding and growing in the communion of divine love, for which constitutionally they were qualified and designed, they voluntarily transgressed the divine law, thereby breaking away from the communion of divine love.

The transgression consisted in false self-assertion. Angels affirmed their own will, and affirmed it in opposition to divine authority. Wilfully ceasing to be centered in God they became centered each in himself. As Hooker observes:

"It seemeth therefore that there was no other way for angels to sin, but by reflex of their understanding upon themselves; when being held with admiration of their own sublimity and honor, the memory of their subordination unto God and their dependency on Him was drowned in this conceit; whereupon their adoration, love and imitation of God could not choose but be also interrupted."¹

Breaking away from the true order of angelic life, they fell under the disorganizing power of a false principle.² By the unaccountable action of their own will self became the

¹ Ecc. Pol. Bk. I. ch. iv. 2.

² "Evil had never been," Augustine maintains, "had not the mutable nature brought evil upon itself by sin. And this its sin is itself proof that its nature was originally good. For had it not been very good, though not equal to its Creator, the desertion of God as its light could not have been an evil to it. For as blindness is a vice of the eye and this very fact indicates that the eye was created to see the light, . . . so the nature which once enjoyed God teaches, even by its very vice, that it was created the best of all, since it is now miserable because it does not enjoy God." *City of God*, Bk. XXII. ch. i.

end of their existence and activity; and when self became their end, they sought to subordinate their own resources and whatever power they had over cosmos in the pre-human eon, even God Himself, to this false end. The birth of false self-assertion was the beginning of a moral conflict, a conflict of the personal creature with the personal Creator. The position and the authority of the Creator was challenged, assailed, antagonized. Contradiction supplanted ethical harmony. Evil mingled with the good, the false with the true.

2. The divine will was the one law of angelic existence, the only law of ethical harmony. Originally this law reigned among all classes of angels and in the life of every individual angel. It determined their normal relations to each other and their normal relations to the world-idea in process of actualization. Hence false self-determination toward God involved angels in a false attitude relatively to all things. Self-assertion against God was in the very act a false self-determination toward their own constitution and the entire world-process. At issue with God, they were at issue with themselves, and with the teleology of the entire creation. Ethical concord was supplanted by ethical division. Harmonious activity among principalities and powers in the heavenly regions gave way to the antagonism of abnormal forces; and the bitterness of hatred took the place of the bliss of love.

III. ORIGIN OF EVIL.

§ 171.

The principle of evil being conceived by the voluntary self-perversion of angelic spirits and beginning to develop its virus in moral disorders, we know that it had to perpetuate itself in the domain of creation, producing manifold

forms of confusion and misery. Wrong-doing no less than right-doing bears fruit after its kind.

A different question however presses for a solution: How may the *principle* of evil begin? The ethical constitution of angels was pure and good. They were pre-adapted and predisposed to the holy communion of love with God. There was no contra-ideal status of existence outside of them. How then could the ideal possibility of not choosing and not doing the right, a possibility inherent in the relative autonomy of created personal spirits, cease to be purely ideal, and pass from possibility to reality? How can moral evil begin in the sphere of the moral good? Can truth originate falsehood? Here the problem concerning the metaphysical origin of sin meets us. Can the problem be solved?

Philosophy and theology have suggested and advocated different theories. But no theory whose aim is to make the metaphysical beginning of evil evident or intelligible to human reason, satisfies Christian consciousness or even the common moral consciousness of mankind.

To understand a beginning we account for it. We discover the cause; we assign the reason. But can we assign a reason for the unreasonable? Can we discover an intelligible cause when the understanding recognizes no law of causation?

Sin contradicts sound reason no less than righteous will. It is irrational as really as it is unholy. Can reason explain the irrational? It is the rational with which reason deals. Does not the effort to account for and understand the beginning of moral evil imply that evil begins according to some law or principle, the recognition of which satisfies the conditions of rational inquiry? But if sin be the contra-ideal status of an angel; if sin violates

all laws, all original conditions, all normal relations; if sin be *ἀνομία*, lawlessness, a something setting itself contrary to laws of existence and laws of thought, how shall we understand its inception? How shall we discover the reason for that for which no reason exists?

§ 172.

All theories which attempt to account for and render intelligible the origin of evil terminate in an implied denial of one or another of the terms of the problem.

1. As a personal creature is a finite being his faculties, and especially the will, are bounded by ideal limits beyond which the creature so long as active according to the laws of his constitution does not choose to go. Limitation varies among different personalities according to the difference of their capabilities. Limitation varies in the history of the same person as his moral strength rises and enlarges. Sin, it has been assumed, is the sense of limitation inseparable from the condition of finite personality. When thus apprehended sin is no more sin. What we call moral evil is only an illusion, a form of experience in the ongoing of moral life, a phenomenal element of the divine idea of the world, a vanishing factor of finite ethical history. Then self-perversion, if the word may be used, is to be regarded as the destiny not the fault of the personal creature.

2. In the present disorganized condition of the world good and evil coexist; pleasure and pain seem to solicit each other. The good is an achievement in the midst of trials and in many conflicts with opposing forces. Not unfrequently a man rises in moral grandeur, in nobility of character in proportion to the strength of hostile forces and the untoward circumstances with which he has to con-

tend. Intense suffering seems to be a condition of some of the best productions of genius.

These facts of experience have suggested the thought that the idea of the good pre-supposes and involves the idea of evil. It is assumed that a good angel in order to realize the highest order of goodness needs the evil as a necessary condition. Evil conditions the actual good as the good conditions the actual evil. If this theory be accepted, the *ethical* antithesis between good and bad, between right and wrong, as given in moral consciousness, must disappear; good and evil are only the opposite poles of the same world-idea, the same angelic constitution.

Two errors are committed by this theory: 1. The original order of the moral world is confounded with its present disorganization, the normal confounded with the abnormal. In the ideal order, the constitution of things as fashioned by the Creator, the good has the resources of development and perfection in the sphere of the good, and all requisite conditions for the actualization of its idea in its normal attitude and normal relations. The contrast between the ideal moral order and the actual moral order as now open to observation, witnesses to the irrationality and the wickedness of sin, no less than to the thorough disorganization which sin has produced. 2. The other error is the assumption that in the present disorganized state of the world evil conditions the good. The true relation is directly the opposite. The good conditions the evil; right conditions the wrong; truth conditions falsehood. If the true, the right, the good were not, the evil could not be. "Good lives always with Thee, from which when we are averted we are perverted."¹ The good has its resources in itself. Evil obtains its resources, not from itself, but by

¹ Conf. of Aug., iv. 16, 31.

abusing and perverting the good. Even in the daily experiences of human society evil is a hindrance to the good; the good maintains itself, and produces the fruits of goodness in spite of the evil. The notion that the true and the good would or could not produce the best fruits if it were not necessary to resist the evil and the false, is an assumption which is unphilosophical no less than unchristian. Reduced to its last analysis it would be a denial of God as the absolute Good.¹

3. Another theory assumes that God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.² Unconditional foreordination includes the lapse of angels from their original integrity.

According to this theory the principle of evil was introduced into the angelic world in consequence of God's decree and as a part of God's eternal providential scheme for the manifestation of His glory. Then the responsibility for the beginning of moral evil passes from the personal creature to the personal Creator.

The advocates of the divine foreordination of whatsoever comes to pass hold that by this divine 'counsel' neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature; yet, as Dr. Schaff says, it was always felt by

¹ Respecting the fundamental thought, that there is requisite for life, even for Divine life, an opposite advancing to antagonism, Dörner says: "How could the Divine life be thought to be perfect, and therefore absolute, if it must cherish conflicts within itself, or if the inner life of God be subject to a succession of developments and do not bear within itself its absolute unification? . . . Were life to live by contradiction, it would itself be an eternal contradiction. Were evil itself to belong somehow to the Divine process of life, this . . . be an eternal contradiction to the idea of God itself." *Christian Dogmatics*, § 80.

² Conf. of Faith, III. i.

the majority of Reformed divines that by irresistible logic the principle makes God the author of sin and death.¹ The fall of angels is referred in the last instance, not to the self-perversion of freedom, but to God; and when referred to His appointment God is arrayed against God; the divine will in the dispensations of Providence regarding angelic spirits contravenes the divine will immanent in the moral order of the world.

4. The metaphysical *beginning* of evil may be denied, and the fact of evil angels be referred to a principle of contradiction contemporaneous with chaos; or the principle of evil may antedate the principle of good. Then we are committed to the doctrine of pagan dualism.

If the dualistic notion acknowledges that God is the Creator absolutely of all things, it must follow that He is the originator of both principles, of the principle of moral evil no less than of the principle of moral good. Then He cannot be in the absolute sense righteous and holy; for evil will have to be referred to a corresponding principle in God.

If on the other hand the dualistic notion denies that God is the Creator of all things and ascribes to His creative will the true and the good only, whilst moral and physical evil are referred to a ground of their own, either to a contrary beginning or to an eternal antagonistic principle, then plainly God cannot be the absolute personality nor the absolute Good.

5. Such theories are in conflict with the universal sense of moral evil. According to the ethical sentiment of mankind wrong and evil, whether ethical or physical, are contra-ideal. The wrong has no right to be. It con-

¹ Revision of the Westminster Conf. by Dr. Schaff, p. 6.

tradiects truth. It arrays itself against whatever has a right to exist and ought to exist. Every endeavor to account for its origin that contravenes the universal sense of an ideal order of truth and right must fail to justify itself before the bar of sound reason.

Especially do these theories come into conflict with the Christian conception of sin. Under every form in which moral evil is set forth in Holy Scripture, it addresses us as *ἀνομία*. It is self-determination contrary to law, contrary to all law, divine, angelic, human.

The most correct conception of sin we get by reflection on Jesus Christ in His relation to fallen angels and to our fallen race. His ideal human life at every point was at issue with the false and the wrong. Against Him bad angels and bad men were arrayed with bitterest malice. If sin be but a necessary limitation of a finite moral being; or if the idea of the good pre-supposes and involves the idea of the bad; or if evil be a necessary principle in the constitution of the world; or if evil was born in the realm of angelic spirits because the scheme of divine providence in history required it for the manifestation of divine glory; then the great redemption wrought out by the incarnate life, the propitiatory death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, if logically estimated, must lose either its wisdom or its sincerity and earnestness.

[173.

The failure of the efforts of genius to make intelligible to human understanding the metaphysical beginning of moral evil in good angels is a logical consequence of the conditions of the problem. The normal inception of an individual organism bars out the empirical inquiries of science. Much more does the

primal beginning of an abnormal order of ethical existence forbid the scrutiny of the understanding.

1. The transition from idea to reality, or from animal life to a new individual, or from sub-conscious psychological activity to the conscious expression of a thought or a purpose by the word, is a hidden process. Such process is the object of intuitive perception and therefore of certain knowledge; but no hidden evolution of an animal, no transition from unconscious human nature to personality is an object of dialectic analysis. To the question: *how* does the acorn *begin* to exist? or *how* does the egg *begin* to be the potential type of the individual bird? or *how* does the embryo of a man *begin* to be in the womb of his mother? neither understanding nor reason can give a satisfactory answer. A satisfactory answer cannot be given because the definitely real, the phenomena of the actual, condition an intelligent judgment respecting an object. The understanding deals with things, with things in form, and with definite relations, not with secret and indeterminate possibilities, whether abstract or concrete. In the invisible and intangible process of becoming, before a thing has developed into real existence, neither thought nor understanding has an object of judgment. The transition from possibility into actuality, from the life-processes of the oak to the inception of the acorn, from the life-processes of the bird to the inception of the egg, are made in the inscrutable depths of living being before an intelligible object can confront the mind's eye. Hence the judgment can affirm or deny only under the guidance of intuitive perception; and intuition can at most discern only the fact of the transition, not its interior mode and hidden conditions.

Such necessary limitation of judgment meets us on every side in the natural world as now constituted. The first beginning of individual existence, or the plastic forces of the principle of life which condition a new form of individuation is now, notwithstanding the valuable discoveries in biology, as it ever has been, below the surface of accessible forms. The secret throes of the human spirit from whose womb a new truth is born into the empire of science have never been resolved into a formula of the understanding. No philosopher has suggested a theory of the metaphysical origin of Hamlet.

2. If the manner of transition from the possible to the actual, from generic life to a new form of individuation, is inscrutable in the domain of nature and of human history, where in a relative sense the normal order prevails, much more inscrutable is the manner of incipient transition from the normal order of angelic personal life to an abnormal condition.

Though disorganization and conflict obtain in the existing world, both in the human race and in sub-human kingdoms, yet in sub-human kingdoms and in humanity there is conformity to original law. There is a measure of true correspondence between processes of thought and external objects; for example, between the principles of pure mathematics and the constitution of nature. Hence we accept as true the astronomer's prediction respecting the day and the hour of the transit of Venus.

But in the realm of moral evil the disorganization is total. The self-contradiction of evil angels is thorough. According to the original and unchangeable law of angelic being, God is the centre of moral life, and the communion of love with God is the only element of legitimate existence. But an evil angel, renouncing the authority of God, is self-

centered. Being self-centered, he is set against God, and against the fundamental law of his moral existence. Instead of living in the communion of love, he lives in the selfishness and aversion of hatred toward God. The ethical life of an evil angel is both perverted and inverted. The mode of his existence and of his activity in relation to his Maker, to his fellow-angels and to himself, falsifies at every point the divine idea of angelic spirit. This contradiction and falsification continue from age to age by the uninterrupted false action of angelic will.

How then may the secret inception of a transition from normal life to abnormal life, from the morally good to an abyss of falsehood and wrong, be logically explicable? Does not the human understanding pre-suppose that the object it seeks to grasp is both real and self-consistent. Is not logic a process conformable to the laws of existence and the laws of thought? Do not the laws of reason postulate objective organization and normal activity? If the human reason is active rationally; if the activity of reason pre-supposes the object of thought to be a rational object, how shall the reason account for the self-contradictory beginning of the irrational?

The categories and laws of human thought answer to the original idea of the spiritual world, not to a falsification and caricature of it. The metaphysical beginning of moral evil from the bosom of the true and the good must therefore be less intelligible than the secret inception of a new form of individuation in the recesses of vegetable or animal life. For the origin of evil not only lies beyond the horizon of the understanding but at the same time contradicts the laws of logical inquiry.¹

¹ "Moral evil is an ultimate fact for us, in our present state of being, in the sense that it can neither be explained nor explained away." *Lux Mundi*, p. 95.

3 Moreover it has to be borne in mind that the metaphysical origin of moral evil involves a relation of the Creator to the creature, of the infinite to the finite, of the eternal to the temporal. To understand this origin both terms of the ethical relation need to be definitely apprehended as mutually affecting each other. But the infinite and eternal as such do not come within the horizon of the logical understanding. God is cognizable only as revealed in normal finite forms, partially in the constitution of the world, truly and completely in the ideal Microcosm. Unrevealed, He is unknowable; falsely represented by His personal creatures, He is both unknowable and blasphemed. There is then no basis of rational thought. The fact given, the origin of evil, is a caricature of the ideal relation of the infinite to the finite. How then can the birth of moral evil from the womb of the moral good be understood? Is not such a birth a logical contradiction?

Nevertheless, reflecting on the angelic world from the standpoint of the Christian doctrine of God and of creation, the fact of the contradiction is undeniable. Sin has had a beginning in time, but the entire angelic world as fashioned by the creative Word was right and good.

§ 174.

In the light of Christian truth we may determine some of the conditions of the problem.

The metaphysical origin of sin we do not understand, but we may know what the problem is, and what it is not. Such knowledge is both possible and necessary.

1. The possibility of sin pre-supposes, first of all, the existence of the *creature*. No creature, no sin. This postulate is fundamental. God as God, God as the Creator, is the absolute Good.

The creation as we know the actualization of the world-idea includes the natural and the moral, or the impersonal and the personal. The personal pre-supposes the impersonal; the impersonal anticipates the personal. Accordingly the possibility of sin presumes the fact of the cosmos, at least the cosmos¹ in the incipient period of its development.

Not that the *present* eon of the world, heavenly and earthly, conditions the possible origination of evil; much less that the inception of the sinful principle¹ arose with the actualization of the cosmic idea in its existing form. But since angelic spirits are an integral part of the cosmos they postulate a *tertium quid*, an order of creaturely existence other than themselves. The *tertium quid* is undefinable; nor is a definite conception of it important. It may have been only the sphere of angelic existence, or it may have been the *prima materia* of the cosmic constitution as subsequently formed during the "six days" of Genesis. Whatever the *tertium quid* may be conceived to have been, we are justified in supposing a kind of otherness distinct from created spirit. Formless created spirit, or spirit having no sphere of existence, or created spirit without nature, absolutely without a natural economy to which created spirits belong, is an hypothesis that fails to justify itself to rational reflection or to Christian intuition. Hence it seems necessary to hold that the possibility of the beginning of sin pre-supposes an economy which includes both the personal and the impersonal, spirit and nature.

¹Says Hooker: It was impossible that ever the will of angels "should change or incline to omit any part of their duty, without some object having force to avert their conceit from God, and to draw it another way; and that before they attained that high perfection of bliss, wherein now the elect angels are without possibility of falling." Ecc. Pol. Bk. I. iv. 3.

In turning against God angelic spirits turn in upon themselves, and turn to nature. A false god takes the place of the true God.

Evil is natural or moral; but moral evil conditions natural evil. Disorder and confusion in the domain of the impersonal proceed from and depend upon self-contradiction in the domain of the personal. Evil *begins* in the sphere of spirit;¹ and disorganizes the natural by virtue of the dynamic connection of the natural with the spiritual. The two things are internally connected as the members of one idea. Disorder passes from above downward, from the ethical to the physical; not from below upward.

2. The possibility of the origin of evil pre-supposes not only creation, but also *personal* creation. Sin begins in a subject endowed with consciousness and freedom. Nature develops and realizes its types according to nature. Natural laws are not of themselves active contrary to natural laws. Of natural laws it may be said that they operate, in a relative sense, with fixed uniformity. From the established mode of operation nature of itself does not deviate, because

¹ As Augustine maintains: "If we ask the cause of the misery of the bad angels it occurs to us, and not unreasonably, that they are miserable because they have forsaken Him who supremely is, and have turned to themselves who have no such essence. And this vice, what else is it called than pride? . . . If the further question be asked, What was the efficient cause of their evil will? There is none. For what is it which makes the will bad, when it is the will itself which makes the action bad? And consequently the bad will is the cause of the bad action, but nothing is the efficient cause of the bad will. . . . When the will abandons what is above itself, and turns to what is lower, it becomes evil, not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is wicked. Therefore it is not an inferior thing which has made the will evil, but it is itself which has become so by wickedly desiring an inferior thing." *City of God*, Bk. XII . . .

Says Thomas Aquinas: "Primum principium bonorum est per essentiam bonum. Nihil autem potest esse per suam essentiam malum." *Sum. Theo.* I. q. 49, Art. iii. 6.

in nature there is no self-impelling potency contrary to itself. The possibility of self-determining motion contrary to law is predicable only of the personal. Nature as it cannot do the evil so neither can it choose the good. But personality to be right, to be active according to its law, must *choose*, and choose the *good*. Only by choosing the good and doing the good, only by willing it, can the personal fulfil its own law. Hence the ideal possibility of not willing the good—a possibility predicable only of an autonomous being. Evil does indeed pervade impersonal existence, and in consequence of the dynamic connection of false spirit with nature, evil reveals itself in impersonal forces, but evil, the contra-ideal in whatever sphere it may come to view, is not referable to an impersonal principle. As evil cannot begin in the sphere of the impersonal, so neither could it perpetuate itself if it were disconnected from its ground in personality.

Evil involves the contra-ideal relation of one existence to another existence, of one impersonal force to another impersonal force; but as to its essence, as to its beginning and its continuation, evil is the self-determined antagonism of *person* to *person*, the antagonism of the relative personality of the creature to the absolute personality of God. The personal subject freely wills that which contradicts the law of God, and contradicts God Himself; in consequence of such false use of free will the subject lives in a moral and physical condition which is contra-ideal.

3. When viewed as ethical activity violating divine law and order, or as being disorder, disorganization and confusion, evil may be regarded as negative. It is the absence of the good, of the right and the true. But the absence of what ought to be is only one aspect of the character of moral evil. The ideal good is wanting because the person is self-

perverted and self-pervverting. This proposition is paradoxical; but self-contradiction enters into the very essence of evil. The perversion of the good is self-perversion; and self-perversion supposes the self-determining power of freedom, that is, of the personal subject from whom perversion proceeds and by whom evil is begotten.¹ Under this view evil is positive as well as negative. It is a *power*, a spiritual force. The positive element of its character evil derives from the self-determination of the personal subject. Negative in many of its forms of manifestation to the eye of the human mind, sin in its ground is positive. That ground is a created autonomy; and an autonomy as created is ideal, realizing so far forth the divine idea. The possibility of the genesis of evil is a predicate of concrete personal being; it is not thinkable as the predicate of an abstraction. Self-pervverting and self-falsifying activity stands in a moral constitution, and is possible so long only as the moral constitution exists and is active.

Hence the metaphysical origin of sin does not imply moral want or deficiency only, not simply the absence of good or of right-doing, much less the falling short of a moral aim merely from weakness of will. The beginning involves the voluntary act of personal spirit in opposition to the Good. The falling short of ultimate perfection, or the missing of the ideal aim of personality, is the effect of

¹ Says Dorner: "If freedom is supposed, as is necessary if God would have a moral world, there is at the same time given the necessary possibility of evil, the necessary existence of a mutable, mobile, creaturely principle endowed with the ability of being an adequate cause of actual evil, but not with the necessity of being such cause.

. . . . Recourse to creaturely freedom for the elucidation of evil is not arbitrary, but necessary; recourse to the caprice of the creature, recourse to possible irrationality." The question is not to be asked, why personality has determined for evil and not otherwise? Evil can not be referred to any other basis than free will." Christian Dogmatics, § 81, see Ps. vii. 14; James i. 15.

choice, a mysterious volition to contravene the law of personal perfection. *Ego* asserts itself against its own fundamental law, a fact for which no reason is to be assigned other than this, that the possibility of false choosing is a prerogative of finite autonomous being.

Says Augustine: "Every fault injures the nature, and is consequently contrary to the nature. The creature, therefore, which cleaves to God, differs from those who do not, not by nature, but by fault; and yet by this very fault the nature itself is proved to be very noble and admirable. For that nature is certainly praised, the fault of which is justly blamed."¹

CHAPTER VI.

SATAN AND HIS KINGDOM.

§ 175.

The manifestation of evil angels runs parallel with the history of Messianic revelation. Its progress conditions the character of their presence and the degree of diabolical action. As pre-Christian revelation approaches its relative perfection in the incarnation their hostile attitude comes more definitely to view. The most perfect manifestation of God, the actual presence of the Christ on earth to rescue men from the dominion of darkness and found a new victorious kingdom of righteous life, conditions and provokes their most distinct manifestation. Then the highest degree of malignant opposition to God is developed in history.

It is chiefly in its attitude toward the Christian economy that we have to study the character and organization of the kingdom of evil spirits.

I. Moral evil makes its appearance on the threshold of human history. Existing anterior to the creation of

¹City of God, Bk. XII. ch. i.

man, evil approaches him from without as an alien principle. The sacred record represents this approach of evil to the primeval family living in the state of innocence under the symbol of a serpent. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made; . . . and the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil."¹ Says St. Paul: "The serpent beguiled Eve." In the book of Revelation the evil spirit gaining access to the human spirit is characterized as the old Serpent.²

The alien spirit approaches with intent to deceive man, and to antagonize God. His first manifestation reveals hatred to the good and the right, the purpose to supplant truth by falsehood. It is with reference to this first assault upon the primeval family that our Lord says: He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.³

¹ Gen. iii. 1-5. Of the moral and spiritual significance of the "Serpent" Delitzsch says: "Granting even that the trees of Paradise and the serpent were mere symbols, this much is still left, that man fell away from that first good development which was implanted in him through the temptation of Satan,—if this is given up, there remains instead of Christianity as the religion of redemption, nothing but a rationalistic Deism, which excludes the supernatural. It is said that the serpent is an emblem of the seductive charm of the earthly. But why is it just the serpent that is chosen for the purpose?"

"Hence, even if the form of the narrative is regarded as mythic or symbolic, the serpent was pre-eminently adapted to represent an earthly power of seduction with a mysterious background. And this mysterious background is, as revelation in its onward course unfolds, the evil which before the fall of man had already invaded the world of spirits." Comm. on Genesis, I. pp. 150, 151.

² Rev. vii. 9, 10. The Hebrew *masith* and the Greek *diabolos* (Devil) are here joined together. Cf. Rev. xx. 2; II Cor. xi. 3.

³ John viii. 44.

The enmity of 'the serpent' to the good and the right is revealed in Cain. As the Lord had not respect unto Cain and to his offering, Cain was very wroth, and rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.¹ In the first man born of woman envy ripened into actual murder. From that epoch two lines of human life divide the race, the descendants of Seth and the descendants of Cain. Wicked men multiply and the earth was filled with violence. Under all forms of manifestation before and after the flood evil shows itself to be *violence*. It is violence done to human life, done to righteousness, wisdom and truth; in a word, violence done to the divine ideal of human history.

2. The same antagonism to the good shows itself in connection with the call and mission of Abraham, the founder of a nation chosen to be the bearer of the Messianic principle. Evil is set against the promise as impersonated by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the aim being to neutralize and frustrate the Messianic purpose of Jehovah in forming one nation, in contra-distinction from all other nations, to embody and develop Truth. This is the key to the understanding of the moral and spiritual conflicts recorded in the Old Testament.

In the earlier history of the chosen nation an alien spirit excites the people to wickedness, especially to violence among themselves, to lust and idolatry. The rich educational economy of Moses is misdirected and misused, so that it may minister, not to righteousness but to corruption, not to the faith of one holy God but to manifold idolatries and superstitions. The masses of the elect people in every period of their history fall a prey to this antagonizing spirit.

¹ Gen. iv. 1-8.

In the five books of Moses, in Joshua, the books of the Judges and of Samuel, evil spirit does not appear in the consciousness of the Israelites as personal spirit. The phenomena of evil betray the false action of personality lying back of these phenomena; but in the earlier ages it is not evident that the chosen nation was conscious of the fact that in their unfaithfulness to Jehovah and in the commission of wickedness they were the servants of a personal evil spirit. The symbol of evil as represented in the third chapter of Genesis reveals personal properties. Evil and the serpent are one in this symbolism.¹

Later on evil bears the name of Belial.² Belial denotes *worthlessness*, or a worthless fellow. Was Belial the name of a demon, a personal evil spirit? An affirmative answer is not warranted. The probability is that in the use of the term there was no distinct recognition of the difference between man as a wrong-doer and evil spirit inciting him to do wrong. In accordance with later Jewish usage the Apostle Paul uses this word as the name of a personal agent. "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" There is an affinity of the original meaning of the word with later usage when it became the bearer of a more mature conception of evil.

¹ The words of Otto von Gerlach definitely express the truth respecting the relation of the Tempter to the "serpent": "Der Verführer zu der Sünde konnte natürlich kein Thier, sondern nur der sein, welcher des Thieres als Werkzeug sich bediente, ein bözartiges Individuum, der Teufel, dessen leibliche Erscheinung nie in der Welt existirte und daher wohl überhaupt unmöglich ist, was man einem Herd dieses Thier zu reden." Das Alte Testament, I. p. 19. The identity of the serpent became proverbial among the Jews (cf. Matt. x. 1).

² Gen. xix. 4-9; Deut. xiii. 13; Judges xix. 22; xv. 13; I Sam. ii. 12; x. 27, and many other places.

³ II Cor. vi. 15. Says Meyer: Belial, the name of the Devil, taken in the concrete the same as *Πονηρός*, the evil one.

3. In the book of Job evil spirit appears as the false accuser, hence bears the name of Satan, the Adversary. Appearing among the sons of God, he alleges against Job, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil, that he does not fear God for nought; that he does not serve God from love, but for earthly advantage: "Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face."¹ When Satan obtains permission to test the integrity of Job by bringing upon him the sorest afflictions, he not only appears as the wilful accuser of an upright man; but he becomes also the author of an extraordinary bodily disease, and a series of unprecedented disasters.

Whether Job is an historical person or only the hero of a poem does not affect the significance of the representation; nor does it matter much in what century of pre-Christian history the poem was produced. Whether among the oldest compositions of the Old Testament or not, the book sets forth conceptions of evil spirit prevalent in the age when written; a conception not of the writer only but of the age which the writer represents.

And this conception is original as contrasted with Persian dualism; Satan and Ahriman being different characters. Ahriman does evil independently of Ormuzd; but Satan is subject to and limited by the will of God. Ahriman represents an original *principle* of evil; whilst

¹ Job i. 6-12; ii. 1-7. "The phrase *and he will curse thee*, i. 11, has the form of an oath in the Hebrew. Satan so little believes in the sincerity of human religion that he is not afraid to take his oath that it is hollow." Job by Dr. Davidson, p. 9. Of the character of Satan as represented in Job, Riehm says: "Er ist ein feindselig gesinnter Ankläger der Menschen vor Gott, der sich ein Geschäft daraus macht, das Böse auszukundschaften, auch die Gottesfürchtigen zu verdächtigen, die Unlauterkeit ihrer Gesinnung an den Tag zu bringen und sie bis zum Abfall von Gott zu treiben." Alttest. Theologie, p. 368.

Satan represents a creature, a spirit dependent on God, and controlled by limitations which God firmly imposes. Accepting the fact that Satan and Ahriman both impersonate evil, they set forth contrary conceptions, and sustain contrary relations to the Good.

4. In Job the evil spirit is by the Lord allowed to be the agent through whom the uprightness of a faithful servant is subjected to the severest test in order to develop and perfect his religious life.

Evil spirit appears also as an agent through whom God visits the penalties of His just judgment upon transgressors, of which Saul is an example. "Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."¹

Another instance we have in the punishment inflicted upon King Ahab for his rebellion and base idolatries. A spirit came forth and stood before the Lord, and said, I will deceive Ahab. "I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets."² So to bring about the punishment of Ahab, the Lord "put a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets;" and the king of Israel went up to Ramoth-Gilead into the battle, and he was slain.

The evil spirit proposes to be a lying spirit in Ahab's prophets, and the Lord uses this lying spirit in bringing the penalty of death upon the king.³ Evil spirit appears as the enemy of truth and righteousness; but he is subject to the will of the Lord, who so controls his willingness to deceive that he becomes the means of executing the divine judgment.

The agency of Satan in the infliction of the righteous judgments of God on transgressors Richm regards as the

¹ I Sam. xvi. 14, 23; xviii. 10.

² I Kings xxii. 22

³ Cf. II Chron. xviii. 18-22.

leading aspect under which evil spirit is represented in the Old Testament.

5. But symbols and particular agencies, 'the serpent,' 'Belial' or 'Satan,' do not afford the clearest revelation of the genius of evil in pre-Christian history. Satan is revealed in the facts of wickedness more forcibly than in words, in the actual history of heathen nations as reflected by the books of the Old Testament, especially in the extraordinary history of the Israelites. The actual development of the Adamic race, above all the contra-ideal life of the chosen nation declares the animus of the Adversary. He falsifies God's righteousness, and perverts the import of God's word. The gifts of Providence become an incitement to sensuality and crime. The special presence of Jehovah in the ceremonial economy, designed for the spiritual education and discipline of the chosen people, is diverted from its high purpose, and so abused as to become the condition for the development of contumacy. The incomparable dignity of the office which the nation was chosen to fulfil is turned into an occasion of unbelief, hardness of heart and manifold forms of disobedience.

Samuel and David became a notable epoch in the history of the Israelites. In the person of Solomon and through the schools of the prophets the theocratic kingdom rises to the zenith of its power and glory. From the time of Hosea and Amos to the Isaiah of the captivity and onward to the age of Malachi, the nation advances toward a fuller knowledge of the one true God, of His paternal relations to it as His own people, and to the more definite perception of the person and kingdom of the coming Messiah. Then also the power of evil, invisible to the bodily eye, asserts its antagonism to truth with greater distinctness; not only in lower and sensuous forms of transgression but with sin-

gular intensity in the higher character of spiritual wickedness.

If we study the religious history of the nation from the age of Samuel to the time of Christ in the light of Christian teaching respecting Satan and his kingdom, we may read in the events of those ten centuries the progress of evil running parallel with the progress of the Messianic principle. Messianic truth provokes anti-Messianic iniquities. The knowledge of God's love and care ministers to ungodliness. The growing hope of the Messiah is transformed into national pride and earthly aspirations. The economy fitted and designed to cultivate spiritual capacity equal to the demands about to be made by the impending Advent, is so misinterpreted and misdirected as to produce among the masses of the nation great moral disqualification for receiving the promised Deliverer, and even to generate the bitterest aversion to His true mission. When at length the ancient promise was fulfilled in the person of the Son of the Virgin, a false Messiah, a false Messianic kingdom, a false salvation, a false national glory, had led captive the body of the very people who above all other nations for a period of two thousand years had been gradually but persistently educated in the knowledge of the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Prophet like unto Moses, the Son of David, the righteous Servant of Jehovah. The powers of spiritual evil appear to be most firmly enthroned in the moral and religious condition of the Jews, just at the time when types and prophecies were about to be glorified by the rising upon the world of the Sun of Righteousness.

6. More definitely still do evil spirits press into the foreground when 'the fulness of time' had actually come, and Messiah is born. The incarnate Son, the living

presence of the true God in man, is the most positive assertion and the most perfect manifestation of Truth and Goodness in the domain of the fallen world. This actual divine presence, this assertion of the ideal Good in the earthly history of the second Man, conditions an extraordinary development and revelation among the Jews of the hidden genius and mighty power of Satan.

The hosts of darkness are marshalled as it were for the last conflict with Light, a spiritual battle in which Satan's leadership may be distinctly seen. He who is the Author, the King and Lord of the normal order of the world is met by him who is king and lord of the abnormal order. The personal *lie* assails the personal Truth.

Satan contends with the Son of Man for the absolute mastery over the whole human race, and through the race for the mastery over the entire creation. As in the beginning the purpose of God in forming man after His own image was to be defeated, so now the purpose of God in redeeming man by a new creation in the last Adam is also to be defeated. Not only the cosmos and providence, but redemption from sin; not only God's power, goodness and wisdom, but His love and grace, are to be so changed as to their character and ultimate issue, that the divine idea of the world will be resolved into a grotesque caricature. The world in all its kingdoms is to stand out a mockery of divine wisdom and divine love.

A twofold scheme of iniquity is to be accomplished: on the one hand the designs of divine wisdom in creation, providence and redemption, are to be frustrated, and on the other, the authority of Satan is to be exalted, and his dominion of falsehood extended over all realms. The 'god of this world' seeks to compass the dethronement of Almighty God, and aims at making himself the absolute anti-god.

The intense wickedness and maliciousness of Satan appear from many facts connected with the person and history of Jesus Christ on earth. Consider Herod's deadly hatred of the infant born at Bethlehem, the threefold temptation in the wilderness, the numerous demoniacal possessions crowding in upon Jesus during His ministry, the bitter animosity of priests and elders, of Scribes and Pharisees, the betrayal by Judas, and the shouts of execration rising from the multitudes to whom in their distresses Jesus had for years ministered. Consider the intense enmity of the leaders of the nation which pursued Jesus through the whole course of His ministry of love, and the bloody persecutions of apostles, evangelists and teachers, and of the infant Christian community by Jews and Gentiles. So persistent and relentless a war waged against the person and ministry of the immaculate Saviour through the wickedness of men, declares the intensely malignant heart of Satan. Nowhere is the malice of the Devil expressed in such appalling forms of enmity to the Good as in the attitude of the representatives of the chosen nation toward their Priest-king.¹

7. The development of preternatural evil in human history running parallel with the progress of Messianic revelation, indicates if not a development of the sinful principle in the nature of fallen angels at least a growing fellowship

¹ In the history of Jesus the fact of the deadly hatred of Evil to the ideal Good, of fiendlike wickedness toward spotless Virtue, no one can deny. Those who choose to ascribe such appalling inhumanity and diabolism exclusively to Jews and Gentiles, (instead of referring it to a mighty personal evil spirit, as its background,) do not get rid, as they suppose, of a devil. Then man is himself resolved into a *devil*. — He is invested with a kind and degree of *malice* which dehumanizes human nature, turns earth into pandemonium, and history into an interminable war of incarnated fiends.

of evil spirits with the life of the heathen and of the Hebrew people.

From the beginning sin possesses the entire human constitution, the ethico-spiritual life as well as the sensuous nature, yet in the earlier ages, the ages preceding Noah and Abraham, the debasing influence of sin shows itself chiefly in the domain of the flesh, and in hostile relations between nation and nation, tribe and tribe, family and family. In later ages, in the period of the prophets, especially in the times of Jesus, the malignant power of evil gains more complete access to the sphere of the human *spirit*, and shows the genius of iniquity directly in the relations of men to God. The ancient idolatry of the heathen arises from false sympathy with nature coupled with aversion to the invisible things of God, perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity. The idolatry of the Hebrews in the times of the Judges and the Kings, arose from the operation of similar causes, but with this difference that their aversion to God is not directed merely against Deity as known by the light of nature, but against Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, against Jehovah as manifested by the covenant of grace. The masses turn against Him who has chosen them from among all nations to be His peculiar people. Yet the wickedness of Jew and Gentile in the time of Jesus Christ shows a quality of malice of deeper dye, as it implies still more of conscious, self-determined hostility to truth and goodness. Malice gnashed its teeth upon redeeming Love.

Equally sensuous, earthly and physical as sin was among the antediluvians and among the descendants of Abraham in their earlier history, it has now become more spiritual. As by the progress of Messianic revelation the

moral and religious capacities of the Hebrews are strengthened and unfolded, the possibilities of moral evil increase. Intellectual culture and moral strength constitute a capability of evil no less than of good. Now among men averse to righteousness Satan comes into closer fellowship with the higher and more spiritual powers of personality. The perverse attitude of the wicked is less negative, more affirmative; less concealed, more daring and defiant. Not only do they fail to do the truth and choose to do the evil, but by conscious acts of will set themselves against God, against the most perfect manifestation of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Evil is embraced not only from spontaneous predilection, not only to gratify the appetites of the sensuous nature, but with a livelier sense of the fact that sin is *sin*, that wickedness contradicts the order of nature and the authority of God. Growing in the love of sin by the commission of sin, the enemies of 'grace and truth' become more really the children of the devil, and accept a baptism from beneath of the satanic spirit.

8. This fearful manifestation of Satan in the moral life of the human soul was consequent upon the advent of the Son of Man. Not that He was the cause of the development of diabolical malice, but its condition and its occasion; and it may be added the necessary condition. The Jew was then approached from heaven, his kinship with God, his inborn susceptibility for truth and righteousness were then challenged, as never before. One of two things was necessary, either to accept 'grace and truth,' or by resisting 'grace and truth' to develop and realize wickedness in more diabolical forms.

The enmity of Satan to truth manifests itself among the Jews in the same character of malice during the apostolic age, and subsequently also among the unbelieving heathen

in proportion to the degree of their knowledge of the Gospel. In modern times demoniacal possessions may doubtless still occur, but they obtain not so often in the form of corporeal affections as in the sphere of rational and moral life, and may be seen not so much in diseases of the body as in manifold conditions of mental diabolism. The iniquity of unbelief keeps pace with knowledge and culture and intellectual strength. It is possible for diabolism to become more daring and more defiant as the psychological powers attain greater discipline and command a wider range of secular knowledge.

§ 176.

Reasoning from hints given at different points in the New Testament it may be asserted that angelic evil is a kingdom, an organized body, of evil spirits. At the head of this kingdom stands a fallen angel of superior power and dignity, to whom the New Testament applies various names, frequently the title of *Satan*.

1. To the fact that Satan is not merely co-ordinate with other evil spirits, but that he is the head of a realm of wickedness, we have numerous references in the Gospels and Epistles. Jesus says: Now shall "the prince of this world" be cast out. Again: I will no more speak much with you, for "the prince of the world" cometh. Again: When the Comforter is come, He will convict the world in respect of judgment, because "the prince of this world" has been judged.¹ Jesus by implication recognizes the fact of a 'kingdom' of evil when He says: "If Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand."² Paul teaches that "the god of this world hath blinded the

¹ John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11.

² Luke xi. 18.

minds of the unbelieving;¹ and in another place that the Ephesians walked according to the course of this world, according to "the prince of the power of the air."² St. John distinguishes Satan from other fallen spirits when he calls him "the evil One."³ Sometimes Satan is spoken of emphatically as "the Devil," and other evil spirits are represented as "his angels:" Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for "the Devil and his angels."⁴ In the Book of Revelation he is declared to be the angel of the abyss, the deceiver of the whole world, who was cast down to the earth, and "his angels" were cast down with him.

Particularly deserving of consideration is the explicit declaration of our Lord regarding the history and relative position of Satan: "Ye are of your father the Devil," He says, "and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof."⁵ Originally Satan was in the truth; but in the truth he did not abide. He became the lie.⁶

¹ II Cor. iv. 4. ² Eph. ii. 2. ³ I John iii. 12. Cf. Matt. xiii. 19.

⁴ Matt. xxv. 41. Rev. ix. 11, xvi. 1. *John. i. 10.*

⁵ The words: "stood not in the truth," Meyer says, express *the actual fact*. "This passage declares the bad moral situation of the devil, *as it is*, without teaching anything as to the origin of this state." "But," he adds, "the fall of the devil is necessarily implied by this saying." Godet thinks "that it is even necessary to go a step farther. The perfect *ῥοπή*, while designating *the present state*, implies the notion of a *past act* to which this state is due; not in this case, if I mistake not, the idea of a fall *out* of truth already known, but that of a refusal to enter into revealed truth, to the end of becoming firmly established therein and of yielding submission to it. Every free being is called at some moment in his existence to sacrifice voluntarily his natural autonomy, and to subordinate his *ego* to the manifestation of good, to the *unveiled truth*, that is, to God who reveals

When he speaks a lie, he does not speak what he has learned or imbibed, but he speaks of his own; he is the beginning of the lie, others learn to be false from him, for he is a liar and the father of the liar. As Chrysostom remarks, "men use a lie not as a thing proper, but alien to their nature, but he as proper."¹ Satan is the original liar, the first angel who turned truth into falsehood whereby he became the source of the falsehood which from him was appropriated by 'his angels.' Deriving by consent from him the falsification of their life, they may be said to occupy towards Satan the relation of children.

2. The headship of Satan may be owing partly to his superior original dignity, partly to his original wickedness.

The inspired writers evidently regard Satan as an archangel who by creation was endowed with a high order of spiritual power. Delitzsch says:

"It is impossible that we should conceive too highly of the rank assigned to this spirit among the heavenly spirits and in creation in general. His rebellion against God, his efforts to supplant Him and to put himself in His place, his acquirement of the sovereignty of this world through the fall of man, can only be explained as the abuse of an exceptionally high place of power bestowed upon him by God."²

The recognition of such extraordinary dignity is implied by the various titles by which he is designated, to some

Himself. Herein is the decisive test for him, from which neither angel nor man escapes. The refusal of this voluntary annulling of oneself in the presence of the revelation of the good, of the perfect good, of God,—this is *evil* in its first form (simply negative). The exaggerated affirmation of the *ego*, positive evil, is its immediate result. This refusal to abdicate before the truth, to go out of oneself and to ingraft oneself in God—herein is the fall both of the devil and the man: it cannot be better formulated than in these terms: "not *to be* in the truth, because one has *not placed* himself there at the required moment, that of its revelation."

¹ Homily LIV.

² Com. on Genesis, I. p. 152.

of which reference has been made. As originally constituted he may have held rank among the mightiest of the host of spirits. There is some reason even to suppose that Lucifer, as Jerome styles Satan, was the noblest among the 'angels which kept not their own principality,' and among the heavenly hierarchy may have had position next to the Son of God.¹ As such he may, before he left his "proper habitation," have been the Prince of an order or community of spirits who in point of dignity and authority occupied a place subordinate to him.

The New Testament represents Satan as 'the deceiver' who by falsehood *introduced* sin into our world, who thus became the principle of all grades of moral evil and all kinds of misery in human experience. So our Lord teaches in the remarkable passage just quoted. 'From the beginning' of the history of our race 'he was a murderer;' he seduced man into the commission of sin, and thereby subjected him to the law of death. Of like significance are the words of the apostle John: "the devil sinneth from the beginning."² The first transgression committed by man is referable not to himself as its original principle, but to the Devil, who 'when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.'

3. Scripture is silent on the question respecting Satan's relation to 'angels when they sinned.'³ Does he bear the responsibility for the fall of other angelic spirits? If we reason from our Lord's teaching on Satan as 'a murderer from the beginning' of human history, we may consistently presume a like agency in relation to the apostasy of 'the angels.' The original falsification of truth in the pre-human world may have begun with him,⁴ then from him

¹ Jude vi. Cf. II Pet. ii. 4.

² I John iii. 8.

³ II Pet. ii. 4.

⁴ Charnock says: "Since the devil hath been agent in the world

and by him, who 'when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own,' the lie may have gained access to other spirits, and so have propagated itself. The postulate is to be steadily maintained that each individual angel sinned voluntarily;¹ inasmuch as he had adequate ability to abide in the truth against the insidious influence of Satan; nevertheless it may be supposed that the fall of an innumerable company of angels was due, like the fall of man, more to the malignity of Satan than to their self-originated perverseness.

According to this conception of the history of Satan, he possessed superior majesty in the 'proper habitation' of angelic spirits. No angel was by the capabilities of his nature so well fitted to become the anti-god. As a consequence he exercises kingly authority in the 'pits of darkness,' the original realm of sin and death, holding in 'subjection to his will all who with him sinned and were cast down to tartarus.'²

The exalted rank and godlike capabilities of Satan rendered several things possible; 1. to get access to a host of angelic 'authorities and powers' and inspire this host, as afterwards he inspired men, with his own purpose of antagonism to God; 2. to originate and actualize the direct contradictory and the thorough caricature of the divine

usurped a worship to himself, which is due only to God, and would be served by man as if he were the God of the world; since all his endeavor was to be worshipped as the supreme God on earth, it is not unreasonable to think, that he invaded the supremacy of God in heaven, and endeavored to be like the Most High before his banishment, as he hath attempted to be like the Most High since." Discourses on the Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock, B. D. Vol. II. p. 562.

¹ Says Coleridge: "Sin is an Evil which has its ground or origin in the agent, and not in the compulsion of circumstances." Aids to Reflection, p. 160.

² II Pet. ii. 4. R. V.

scheme of the world; and 3. to usurp dominion as the false god and hold sway over the entire realm of evil.

The author of moral evil and the sum of iniquity, angelic and human, Satan is the mightiest exponent of the fallen world, and the personal organ through whom the warfare of falsehood against truth, of wrong against right, is ever waged.

4. That moral evil is organized, a kingdom of personal beings, is sustained by the ordinary events of human experience.

The individual sinner, whether angel or man, cannot stand alone in the pursuit of wickedness; nor can he maintain opposition to God, if supported by communion with impersonal things only. To execute wickedness he needs *personal* fellowship. A bad man must have the support afforded by association with bad men. The weaker and less gifted look up to the stronger for authority and guidance; the stronger and more highly gifted depend for sympathy and co-operation upon the weaker. Illustrated by a band of robbers. The spirit of iniquity, of hostility to God, to the true, to the right and the good, is common to all and animates all, imparting mock unity and harmony to a gang of transgressors. The one who by nature is the stronger among the strong becomes the exponent and the most powerful embodiment of the common iniquity. Occupying such pre-eminence, and maintaining an authoritative attitude toward associated members, he becomes the genius and the head of the whole crew. He rules in all, he rules over all, yet the principle of action which inspires all members is at bottom the principle of selfishness. The organization of wickedness among bad men, figures the organization of wickedness among fallen angels.

Here a contradiction meets us. On the one hand there

is organization, which implies the subordination of individuals to a ruling mind. On the other we have the principle of selfishness, which implies the insubordination and antagonism of individuals to the ruling mind, and of individuals to one another.

This paradox is rooted in the nature of wickedness. We have to remember that as to its essence sin in the concrete is self-contradiction. Being the direct contradictory of God, self-contradictoriness shows itself not only in single acts of transgression but also in all complex forms of iniquity. It is therefore according to the nature of sinfulness that the idea of organization among fallen angels and fallen men involves a logical inconsistency. If sin did not run counter to right, order, reason, it would not be sin.

Nevertheless we may discover in moral evil an element which has the force of law in the organization of wicked spirits. Whilst sin perverts and falsifies angelic life, it does not annul the original law of angelic personality in which sin dwells; for the principle of order and of community, though active contrary to truth, still asserts its presence. As the lie pre-supposes truth, as wrong pre-supposes the right, so does the self-contradiction dominant in the angelic sphere of moral evil pre-suppose an immanent law of order, of authority and subordination. Inasmuch as there is a Prince and a kingdom of light; there is also in the contra-ideal realm of personality a kingdom and a Prince of darkness. The sinful principle is realized in a caricature of organization; and because realized in a caricature of organization of angelic spirits it is the tendency of wickedness as practiced by men to assume some form of order and co-operation.

Whether actualized in the angelic world or in the human world, the principle of sin is the same. If we know

the characteristic phenomena of wicked men we know the characteristic phenomena of wicked angels. Human sinfulness images angelic sinfulness; just as the good fulfilled by the ideal Man images the goodness of God. In both cases we reason legitimately from the seen to the unseen, from the manifestation to its corresponding ground.

§ 177.

This law of development and manifestation of moral evil, conditioned on the presence and growth of the kingdom of God, is still operative, and it may continue to be operative with increasing force as the righteousness of Truth develops its normal strength, until the antagonisms between good and evil during the progress of the current æon shall at the touch of the Parousia, be ripe for the final catastrophe.

1. The kingdom of Satan has not yet attained to the full measure of actual power and manifestation, either among fallen angels or among fallen men. The progressive development of the Christian Church, of ideal life in actual character, conditions the progressive development of sin. As the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ invigorates and elevates the ethical nature of His people and of the race, there comes to prevail a nobler domain to which Satan seeks to gain access, a domain which, because it is nobler, is when vitiated better fitted for the revelation of the hidden depths of iniquity than paganism, or Judaism, or the first ages of the Christian Church.

2. Satan and his host reveal a disposition to embody themselves and the genius of the kingdom of darkness in other spheres of creation. There seems to be some affinity of fallen spirits for every species of mundane existence. As bad men may use the unseen laws and

relations of nature for bad ends, so may not evil spirits use 'this world,' as the organ of their malice?

Satan has allied his wicked will with the invisible in natural forces. Jesus rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. Is it accidental that Matthew, Mark and Luke, use each the verb ἐπετίμησεν?¹

Satan has allied himself with the instincts and capabilities of mankind. As the spirit of man may by art, within limits, change the structure of many species of the animal kingdom, and train brutes to deeds or tricks of violence to which by their own instincts they are not prompted; so may not the spirit of a fallen archangel, as the New Testament in many places evidently assumes, gain access to men with their consent, and use human endowments, corporeal or psychical, as agencies for the aggravation of physical and mental diseases, or for the multiplication of wicked deeds? Says the apostle John: The whole world lieth in the evil one.²

What else do the demoniacal possessions recorded by the synoptists mean? What else is to be inferred when Paul says that "the God of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving"? and that believers are wrestling, "not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities,

¹ Matt. viii. 26; Mark iv. 39; Luke viii. 24.

² I John v. 19. John teaches that the *wicked one* "holds the entire world, so far as the new life has not transformed it, in his power. It is not said that the world is 'of the wicked one.' The men of the world are 'in him that is false'; but the 'in' is not used in its bare simplicity, but 'lieth in,' a phrase nowhere else occurring, and to be interpreted according to the tenor of the Epistle. The 'whole world' is not, however, the men of the world only; but its entire constitution, its entire economy, its lusts and principles and motives, and course and end: all that is not 'of God' lies in the power and bondage of the wicked one. This the apostle adds as an old truth, never so fearfully expressed as here." Pope and Moulton in Schaff's Commentary.

against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places"?¹ We may rightfully decline to concur with Tertullian in ascribing to demons

"some inexplicable, unseen poison which blights the apples and the grain while in the flower, or kills them in the bud, or destroys them when they have reached maturity;"²

or decline to accept the words of Origen:

"And if we might speak boldly, we would say that if demons have any share at all in these things, to them belong famine, blasting of the vine and fruit trees, pestilence among men and beasts;"³

but recollecting our uncertain knowledge of the spiritual world we may not consistently decline to recognize the unseen reality which is imperfectly represented by the crass conceptions of some of the Fathers concerning the kingdom of evil.

Nor has natural science, as Huxley in the famous Wace controversy concedes, any thing to say by way of controversy; for personal spirits, whether human or angelic, whether good or bad, live by common consent beyond the horizon of a science that, however necessary and useful, deals professedly only with the phenomena of the natural world. The rationalistic exegesis which ascribes demoniacal possessions to superstition and turns the records of the New Testament on this dark theme into delusive fancies, if applied to all Bible teaching on things invisible and preternatural, would resolve the entire spiritual world into unreality. There is but a short step between a mockery of the Devil and a mockery of the Redeemer.

It is not forgotten that belief in the personality of the Devil and in the influence of demons on human affairs

¹ II Cor. iv. 4. Eph. vi. 12.

² Apology, Ch. 22.

³ Contra Celsus, Bk. VIII. 31.

assumed grotesque forms during the middle ages; nor that mistaken interpretations of diabolical possessions have led good men to commit deeds of horror. But does the abuse of the facts of Scripture prove that there is no truth in their representations respecting the power of the Devil over bad men and over nature? Is it superstition to hold that Satan is that "evil one" who is the "prince of this world"? because some theologians and scholars have in other ages misunderstood and misapplied some of our Lord's miracles? If this principle of reasoning were applied to real superstitions, would not the monstrous errors of polytheism prove that there is no God? would not the oracle at Delphi prove that Isaiah cannot be a genuine prophet? or the fetish worship of Africa prove that no worship is worthy of man? or the *totem* of our American Indians prove that there is no divine Providence?

3. It is important to emphasize the proposition that Satan has allied himself with men in their religious history. This is true of the religious life of pagans, of Mohammedans, of the Hebrew people, but no less true of the Christian Church.

Satan seeks to embody himself in the new creation. By His threefold temptation in the wilderness he tried to turn Jesus Christ Himself into a lie, and thus to change the Son of Man into a bearer of sin and make Him the organ of the kingdom of darkness. The end which he failed to reach in the history of our Lord, he has been and is now aiming to accomplish in the members of His mystical body.

Satan enters the Christian communion, and during the ages he has been working towards embodiment, feigning the faith and cultus of the church, in order to prostitute the economy of grace to false ends. As Paul teaches: the mystery of lawlessness doth already work; and it will con-

tinue to work. Prior to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ there shall first come "the falling away, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God setting himself forth as God." His "coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."¹

When the Man of Sin, that "lawless one," now in process of coming, shall be fully revealed in association with the growth of the Church, then will the kingdom of Satan attain to the acme of power on earth; and the day of Jesus Christ will be nigh at hand. Says Alford: "we still look for the Man of Sin, in the fulness of the prophetic sense, to appear, and that immediately before the coming of the Lord."

4. The last crisis in the spiritual war now in progress will be the conflict of Satan and his host with the saints of the Most High, when the Son of Man with His holy angels shall come to judgment in the clouds of heaven.

The battle portrayed in the twentieth chapter² of Revelation may be located in the Roman empire during the latter part of the first century; or, as others assume, it may be put at the time of the fearful convulsions which during the latter half of the fifth century ended in the overthrow of the Roman empire and the triumph of the spiritual power of the Church. No one spiritual battle, however, no war of Satan with the Church in times past, was the final conflict. Each is an exponent of the antagonism of the kingdom of

¹ II Thess. ii. 1-12.

² Rev. xx. 1-10.

Satan to the kingdom of Christ, an antagonism which became and is becoming more intense and more virulent from age to age. The entire history of this spiritual warfare is prophetic of the final battle.¹

Then Prince will meet Prince; kingdom close with kingdom. Amid awful convulsions involving the heavens and the earth, the dominion of Satan will be abolished, and the consequences of sin as they affect the redeemed of the Lord will be surmounted. The victory of the Son of Man in the wilderness, in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, in the resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the right hand of the Father; the victories achieved by His Church through all past ages, and now in process of achievement will then be consummated. The Devil and his entire army of evil spirits will be cast into "the lake of fire" and shut up forever in their own place, being "tormented day and night forever and ever;" whilst the triumphant Church adorned as a bride will be glorified with the Bridegroom in the heavenly realm.

¹ Says Bengel: "They who believe that the Millennium is coming, will be found to have the true meaning, rather than those who contend that this period (A. D. 1716) has been the Millennium; nor do they delay the course of the sun, who speak against it. . . . There is no error, much less danger, in saying that the thousand years are *future*, but rather in interpreting these years, whether future or past, in a carnal sense. The doctrine of the *Son* of God is a mystery, His *cross* is a mystery, and lastly, His *glory* also."

CHAPTER VII.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

§ 178.

The Son of God is the Alpha, the Beginning, the positive ground of all things. The Son of God incarnate is the Omega, the Last, the ultimate End and positive conclusion of all things.¹ As all things begin in the Son and end in the Son, so the continuance of all things and the eonic stages of the entire world-movement stand in Him, and are active for Him as their final cause.

1. The Son incarnate is the First and the Last in His relation to the natural creation. So the New Testament explicitly teaches. All things were made by Him. In Him were all things created. In Him all things 'hold together.' All things have been created through Him and unto Him. God has spoken unto us in His Son whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.²

The laws, operation and teleological processes of creation, whether physical or ethical, are perpetually sustained by His immanent presence, and controlled by His will. With the universal whole of the world He has an internal and perennial connection.

The Son incarnate is the Head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. As of the old so of the new creation He is the beginning and the end. The kingdom of nature consummated in the first man and

¹ Rev. i. 8; xxi. 6; ii. 8.

² John i. 3; Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 1-3.

the kingdom of grace consummated in the second Man proceed from the same original ground; though different and opposite, the two kingdoms are bound together by a common divine law.

Two orders of existence, the former the physico-ethical basis, the latter the spiritual crown of one sublime constitution, as they proceed from one original principle, so they are to be completed in a common perfection, each after its own nature and office.

To the incarnate Son all authority is given in heaven and on earth, and under the earth.¹ "This division," says Bengel, "goes further into the height and depth than that, Ex. xx. 4." It is the good pleasure of the Father that in the Son should all the fulness dwell.² According to the doctrine of Paul this fulness is threefold, the fulness of divine wisdom, of normal human development, and of the ideal cosmological process. On the one hand, creative, formative and governing energy, and on the other life-giving, redeeming and perfecting grace stand in Him. Through Him as the only Mediator the Father by the Spirit is reconciling all things unto Himself, all things through Him alone, whether they be things upon the earth or things in the heavens.³

2. This originative, all-pervasive, all-controlling energy of love, by which the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace are upheld and governed, each according to the divine idea of which it is the bearer, and so governed that all normal eonic processes, personal and impersonal, all contra-ideal forces of nature, all antagonisms of Satan, of his angels and of wicked men, including particular seasons, and all events, all persons and things, good and evil, work together effectually towards the ultimate actualization, at

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18; Phil. ii. 10-11.

² Col. i. 19.

³ Col. i. 20.

the Second Coming, of the teleology of the universal whole of created existence, is the Providence of God.¹

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Divine Providence is co-extensive with the work of creation. God upholds all things, and governs all things.

1. Providence pertains to the universe as a *whole*, and to the *all* of things. It embraces the angelic realm, including all orders of good angels and evil angels. Providence embraces the kingdom of nature, all classes of inorganic substances, no less also every species of organisms. It embraces pre-eminently the kingdom of man, all races, nations, families and individuals, through all the eons and epochs of time. To all cycles of existence Providence pertains both as different from, and as connected with one another by the divine idea of the world, the immanent and unfolding idea in process of realization. Thus related to the old and the new creation, Providence is the *universal* activity of the incarnate God.

2. God continues all things in existence by the *immanent working* of His will, a working which is in sympathy with and in fulfilment of His creating will.

So the Scriptures teach. Says our Lord: my Father worketh even until now, and I work.² Says Paul: One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.³ God hath spoken unto us in His Son, who being the very image of His substance, is upholding all things by the word of His power.⁴ The Son, the firstborn of all creation, is before all things, and in Him all things con-

¹ Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 25-28; Matt. vi. 25-32; Luke xii. 24; Phil. i. 6; Rom. viii. 28; xi. 36; Rev. v. 13.

² John v. 17.

³ Eph. iv. 6.

⁴ Heb. i. 3.

sist.¹ The Heidelberg Catechism says: 'God upholds heaven and earth, with all creatures.'²

This conception of Providence asserted by the Scriptures and Christian consciousness, is involved in the Christian doctrine of God and in the Christian doctrine of the world.

The triune God alone is of Himself, in Himself. The world though in a relative sense invested with autonomy, is conditioned existence. Says Augustine: "For although it can be nothing without Him, it is not what He is." As the ground of its being is other than itself, it carries in its mysterious depths no self-supporting resources, no on-going energy. By the divine word the creature began to be, and to be active after its manifold laws; so by the uninterrupted in-dwelling of that word the world continues; and it continues to be upheld to the end that the original design of creation may be actualized.

The upholding activity of divine immanence does not overwhelm the creature; nor does it either supersede or disturb the functions of secondary causes, whether physical or moral. Just the contrary. Immanence answers to the divine origination; maintaining each creature in accord with its original type, its present functions and its ultimate purpose. Could we conceive of the withdrawal of the divine presence, we should then also, if we reasoned logically, have to assume confusion, if not destruction, as the inevitable consequence. God's providence is active for His creatures, each and all, not active against the ideal of anything He has made, whether great or small.

God's upholding presence is maintaining the *normal* order of the world, but not maintaining abnormal relations and phenomena. He neither causes the existing evils

¹ Col. i. 17.

² Heidelberg Catechism, 27.

springing from the contra-ideal operation of cosmical laws, nor sustains evils; they are contrary both to His originitive and His immanent will; but He upholds the cosmos including all its kingdoms, notwithstanding the disorganization and the confusion brought about by alien powers. It is the world-plan that is continued in force; God is active after His plan, executing His sovereign will of love; active unchangeably with reference to the pre-determined end of creation; His upholding will being at all points in accord with His formative will.

3. The same principle will have to govern our judgment respecting moral agents, since God's upholding activity extends to the entire creation.¹ Personal spirits, though sinful, no less than personal spirits that are righteous, stand in the creative word. God upholds Satan and his angels. He neither supports the sinfulness of their nature, nor connives at their sinful activity; but He upholds Satan's *being*, and upholds him in that class of existences to which by the eternal purpose he belongs; notwithstanding the fact that he persists in the prosecution of wickedness. Otherwise no angel could have apostatized from his ideal integrity, nor live the false life of sin. If God should withdraw His upholding presence from angels because, having become sinful, they antagonize His authority, one of two things would follow: either fallen angels would be self-sufficient, they would carry in themselves alone all the resources of existence; or an act of transgression would be equivalent to an act of self-annihilation. In the one case thought would drift into nihilism.

¹ Physical and spiritual are alike embraced by God's Providence, says Dorner, "but in a teleological respect, in view of the eternal world-plan and absolute purpose, the supreme good of God is accomplished in Christ; God's world-plan is certain of fulfilment, despite every hindrance." *System of Christian Doctrine*, § 37.

in the other, the kingdom of darkness would be an impossibility.

What is true of upholding Providence as regards wicked angels is true also as regards wicked men. Although God hates their sinful disposition; though He condemns and punishes all forms of transgression; and His condemnation falls upon the wrong-doer so long as he continues in wrongdoing; He nevertheless by the immanent working of His will, inasmuch as the purpose of creative wisdom is changeless, upholds wicked men in existence.

This conception of upholding Providence is implied in the teaching of Paul. "In God," he says, "we live, and move, and have our being."¹ The pronoun *we* embraces the apostle and the Athenians whom he was addressing. All his hearers, irrespective of moral character, were living their life in God. God's activity in upholding the life of pagan nations is definitely expressed in the discourses of Barnabas and Paul spoken to the multitudes at Lystra. God "left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling you hearts with food and gladness."² Of equivalent force are the words of our Lord: your Father which is in heaven, He says, "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."³ Evil men no less than good men share the gifts of Providence, though the one class are unthankful and abuse God's gifts, whilst the other class accept them with thankfulness and use them for right ends.

4. The wisdom of the universal upholding activity of Providence, though the moral subjects of His government transgress divine law, stands in the original world-idea. The divine plan realized in the manifold kingdoms of

¹ Acts xvii. 28.

² Acts xiv. 17.

³ Matt. v. 45.

creation is unchanging, a plan which will stand in its unity and its totality including all essential parts; and it will move onward dynamically through the ages towards the appointed goal, notwithstanding the self-perversion of finite personalities, and the contra-ideal action of physical laws. Providence is responsible for fidelity to the original plan of the universe, not for the antagonism of His creatures to His irresistible purpose. God's upholding will immanent in angels and men, though they be active against truth and right, is the uninterrupted activity of Providence in harmony with His creative will of Love. Should God cease to uphold personal beings because they have become wicked, Providence would contravene the plan and purpose of creation.

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In the act of upholding Providence also governs all things. God's government is general and particular: pertaining to the universe as a whole, and to all its constituent kingdoms; pertaining to each kingdom as a kingdom, and to every part or individual member of it. His government is co-extensive with His upholding presence.

1. Jerome thinking it derogatory to God to have special care for the lower creation, supposed that He concerns Himself only about the genus, not about the species. Following him, the African bishop Junilius¹ drew the distinction between *gubernatio generalis* and *gubernatio specialis*. Since his time this distinction has been recognized by theology as valid; but if mechanically understood it is prejudicial to the idea of God as the living God. Providence in governing the world as a whole governs all parts of it; for the whole comprehends the parts, and is

¹ About the middle of the 6th century.

inseparable from them. The notion of Jerome that it is derogatory to divine Majesty to have special care of fishes and flies overlooks the organic unity of the world, as well as the internal necessary connection of all sub-human kingdoms with human personality.

Divine governing activity is internal and necessary. God does not control the movements of the world by the exertion of power upon it from without, nor according to any supposable arbitrary determination; not for reasons arising only from the good pleasure of His sovereign will, regardless of the constitution with which He has endowed His creatures. The aim of His government is to develop and realize His originaive and formative will.

2. As God upholds all things by the immanence of His will, so He governs all things, all natural laws and processes, all moral beings and moral activities by the same *immanent* working. But divine immanence does not exclude the interposition of God from without in the onward movement of the universe; nor does it supersede His objective manifestation to the different branches of the ethical kingdom; much less does His immanent energy shut out the exercise of authority over angels and men in the way of command or prohibition, of approval of the righteous and of condemnation of the wicked. The one form of divine government demands the other form. Transcendent authority and God's immanent will are mutually responsive.

A remote analogy may be seen in the government of his family by a father. His race type, his national type of life, and the distinguishing traits of his family history are transmitted by the law of heredity and become fixed ruling forces in the physical and moral constitution of his children. Consistent with this immanent and fundamental

determination of their life is the moral and spiritual tone which by speech, by conduct and daily habits he imparts to the family character; consistent also with the authority which by his presence and his commands he exercises from day to day.

3. God's government is at all points in accord with the organization and design of the world as fashioned by the creative word. This is a broad principle. God is self-consistent. There can be no antagonism between God and God, between His will and wisdom in forming the universe and His will and wisdom in directing its history.

Cosmology must recognize different kingdoms, different classes of things in every kingdom; and in each class, whether personal or impersonal, there is an endless diversity of single things, of individual members, each individual and each thing sustaining connections corresponding to the nature and distinguishing properties of each. God governs conformably to the constitution with which every kingdom, every genus and species, each thing, or individual, or person, is endowed. In the mineral kingdom He rules according to mineralogical laws; in the vegetable kingdom according to the generic type of the plant; in each species of plants according to its specific qualities; in the animal kingdom according to the distinctive type of the animal; and in each genus or species according to its peculiar laws of life and its habitat. Impersonal realms God governs in harmony with the nature and the conditions of the impersonal; divine government being as multifarious as the kingdoms of nature.

4. This general principle is especially applicable to angels and men. On this higher plane God's governing activity differs from His government of sub-human kingdoms as widely as personality differs from impersonal things

or mechanical laws. Personal beings God governs after the unique constitution of personality. Angels He governs consistently with the law of angelic life. Man He so governs as to maintain and develop the autonomy of man. The physico-ethical constitution with which he in distinction from all other creatures is endowed, God honors and aims to perfect. His government of our race though fallen and sinful, corresponds to the original intent of its creation, to the essential relation between God, the archetype, and man formed in God's image, and is administered with reference to the consummation of this living imageship in union with the second Man. In the kingdom of the new creation He governs in conformity to the law of life in Christ Jesus, and in relation to every member of the Church the action of His governing will is modified by the individuality and vocation of each.

No two kingdoms, no two stages of Messianic revelation, no two periods of the history of the Church, no two persons are governed alike; just as two sons of different capacities, different temperaments and tastes are by a wise father not educated for the same vocation. The same love, the same wisdom and righteousness determine all providential dealings with every nation, every age, every person, but the wisdom of infinite love so directs these dealings that the touches of God's hand in each case answer to the natural and moral conditions of the subject. No providential act is arbitrary; nor may we think of it as dictated exclusively by the supposed sovereignty of the divine counsel.

Moreover God governs innumerable classes of impersonal things and all ranks of personal beings in accordance with the position which each class, each rank, occupies, and with the manifold connections of each in the grand economy of the universe, embracing the old creation and

the new creation as integral parts of one system. No less also does the government of every thing, every angel, every man, correspond to the relation which each thing in its place, every angel in his rank, and every man for himself sustains to a common teleology. The individual and the race as a whole are upheld and controlled without any infraction of their laws, rights or conditions.

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These particulars may be summed up in one general proposition. The entire governing providence of God harmonizes with natural law and with moral law. The creating will and the providential will are one.

1. Natural law is connected on the one side with the creative word, in which natural law has its beginning, and from which it derives its energy and mode of action. On the other side, natural law is connected with the *end* of the creative word. The ideal forces of natural law work together toward that end as their proper consummation, somewhat as the nature and growth of a tree work toward the production of ripe fruit.¹

The natural economy is a member of the complex organism of the cosmos; having capacities and susceptibilities answerable to its position relative to its origin, its union with the moral order, and relative to its end. The outward phenomena of nature which address the bodily senses and lie within the scope of the ordinary understanding manifest but one period and one aspect of natural

¹ The Psalmist draws his imagery of the 'blessed man' from the tree planted by the streams of water. Our Lord takes the sower and the seed, the husbandman and the vineyard, the vine and fig-trees, as objects through which in parables He sets forth the profoundest truths concerning His kingdom.

law, a period moreover which now is not ideal. When God in His providence sees fit to lay hold of the natural kingdom, modifying its conditions and transforming its qualities after a wonderful manner which betokens an invisible Presence working in nature other than the common operations of natural law, as when our Lord turns water into wine, God, so far from suspending or contravening natural laws, touches the hidden synthesis of nature with its Author; and reveals latent susceptibilities to the action of that infinite wisdom in which the natural economy was constituted. The material organization of the human body answers to the demands of personality, revealing latent capacities of skill that keep pace with the progress of science and art. So when by the immanent working of God the clock has struck the solemn hour of a new epoch, that Presence active from within, and active from without, uncovers a fitness in nature to be the organ of divine love for the manifestation of spiritual truth which until then was not indicated by outward phenomena.

2. In the angelic world and in the kingdom of man God governs conformably to *moral* law; His authority being active in accord with personality. Finite will is upheld in governing finite will. As He cannot violate the natural, so much less can He violate the personal. It is God's sovereign counsel to strengthen and perfect finite freedom in the act of ruling in and over freedom.

Like the natural economy, man is connected essentially in two directions, backward and forward; on the one side with the being and life of God, a connection that has not been dissolved by human apostasy; on the other side, with the manifestation of God's ultimate glory to be realized in His incarnate Son, a glory of which man is fitted and designed to be the noblest organ; and to the fulfilment of

this sublime destiny his endowments of soul and body are answerable.

3. Wonderful as are the present phenomena of man's physical and metaphysical organization, these phenomena are nevertheless but a partial, one-sided and very incomplete manifestation of the unfathomable mystery of his constitution. The manifold, the most profound possibilities of personality have not yet risen from the abysmal depth of divine imageship to stand forth defined before the eye of consciousness. The Author of man alone knows how "fearfully and wonderfully" man is made. Current phenomena are far too narrow a basis for an exhaustive judgment concerning that which is, and that which is not compatible with the conditions of ethical life and individual freedom. God deals with man not after man's superficial and circumscribed opinions respecting himself, not only according to the relations which he now bears to nature and existing civilization, but His dealings with him answer also to the teleological law operative in the objective mystery of his being, as man is related backward to the eternal divine idea of the world and related forward to the realization of the ultimate end of all conic processes. Constituted the exponent and crown of the lower kingdoms, man is governed as the organic head of the world.

No event rightfully attributable to divine causality occurring in the history of our race, or of a nation, or of a single individual, can be correctly judged or adequately appreciated from any point of view which is less divine or less comprehensive. When a man is born again 'of water and Spirit,' thus becoming the subject of divine grace and a member of Jesus Christ, God, so far from infringing the prerogatives of personality or violating the autonomy of will, revives with effect his moral prerogatives,

conserves his autonomy, establishes his freedom and promotes his ideal history; for human personality finds its complement in mystic union with divine personality. The love of God in Christ Jesus meets the original and abiding necessities of the whole man, both of the human race in general and of the individual in particular.

§ 182.

The upholding and governing providence of God are two aspects of one activity of righteous love ; an activity in the kingdom of nature and in the moral world which in every period has direct reference to a predetermined ultimate end ; an end which is the same as the beginning. The beginning differs from the end chiefly in this, that the end is the realization of the truth potentially present in the beginning. From this point of view we may rightfully study the events and experiences of history.

1. As all things were created in the Son and through the Son, so divine Providence in and over all things attains to the full expression of wisdom in the Son.

Every event, great or small, in the domain of matter and of mind, in the manifold kingdoms of nature and in the kingdom of grace, in the angelic world as well as in human history, sustains a definite relation, not only to all other events, but to the perfect realization of the glory, now only partially manifest, of the incarnate Son. As the cosmos is upheld and governed in order to consummate the counsels of love and wisdom, natural phenomena and the course of human history are to be studied in relation to this end. So far as normal and ideal, things work after a positive manner toward the fulfilment of Providence. Things abnormal and contra-ideal disturb and falsify the

course of Providence, but they do not suspend the energies of divine love, nor frustrate the consummation of wisdom. Of abnormal phenomena, in whatever kingdom they may appear, we have to judge by their attitude relative to the final glory of the incarnate Son.

This is a recognized law of judgment. We proceed on the teleologic principle when we study any department of nature. A tree the naturalist studies as to its whole structure, reviews its growth, and inquires into its purpose or the end towards which its life is developing. On the same principle we study the life of a prominent character in church or state, like Charlemagne, or Hildebrand, or Washington. As we judge trees so we judge men, by their fruits, by the significance of their work in its relation to the progress of truth and righteousness.

So is every dispensation of Providence to be judged not by itself as if unrelated to the ends of wisdom now impending, nor yet with reference only to an individual or some definite effect in time, immediate or more remote, lying within the narrow horizon of human apprehension, but it is to be estimated with reference to that which is ultimate and absolute for the whole world-movement from its inception to its close.

2. The ultimate glory of the incarnate Son as the end of creation and providence is a truth of revelation, a truth inwoven with and pre-supposing all the processes and convulsions of history. Of that glory we now can have only a general and indefinite anticipation. Of Daniel Webster when a young man his teachers expected an extraordinary career; but as the development of his great power lay in the future and required favorable conditions for ripening and display, no teacher nor friend was able in advance to describe the senator in the zenith of his strength. His

celebrated reply to Hayne was a surprise even to his contemporaries.

A definite conception of the glory of the incarnate Son depends not chiefly on prophetic teaching as found in the New Testament, but in addition on two things : 1. on the actualness of the consummation, and 2. on the advancement of the Church with Him into the state of glorification. Then only will the two necessary conditions of complete knowledge prevail: the reality of the object, or the positive fulfilment of the end now only in prospect, and the requisite measure of human capacity to form an adequate judgment.

Meanwhile the *why* and the *wherefore* of innumerable particular events occurring in the history of nations and families and in the experience of individuals, especially since good forces and evil forces now commingle, must remain for us in great measure inexplicable. By faith we know that God deals with the members of Christ in loving kindness no less than infinite wisdom. But the instances are few when we can understand the necessities of wisdom, or satisfactorily explain the divine reason for permitting contra-ideal natural causes and abnormal moral causes so to work together that they converge in a disaster like the Johnstown flood. In this the infantile period of our spiritual history we have to be content with the certain knowledge that God is not the efficient cause of evil; such a calamity goes counter to the positive purposes of divine love and to the ideal order of the world as really as it contravenes humanity; for, is not every grade of human suffering and every form of death referable to the curse consequent upon the *violation of the divine will*? Yet evils do not revel outside the compass of divine control. God overrules the ills of man's apostasy, including the consequences of

the unideal attitude of nature, to the triumph of His Church and the salvation of men.

Now we are like 'little children' growing up under the authority of a loving father. A boy cannot understand why his father forbids one thing and commands another; but if he is confiding and obedient, he will under parental training by and by come to an age and develop a character when he may see the wisdom of the command that was grievous, or may even from the heart approve the discipline against which in boyhood he had rebelled. The attitude toward God becoming a Christian, like the right attitude of a child, is that of undoubted confidence, cheerful resignation, and firm hope.¹

3. All things are continually governed as they were created and as they are upheld, in love and righteousness. This is the Christian doctrine of divine providence. We know that to them that love God all things work together for good.² How can the finite understanding discover and trace the numberless hidden connections, past and future, of some particular event with the final glory of the world scheme? Recognizing the truth and the necessity of divine providence, general and special, theology can affirm the principle, the law and the end of the process, and thus teach fundamental truth and deny fundamental error. Compared with mythology, or pagan philosophy, or unchristological speculation, or the deliverances of natural science, this is a gain of transcendent moral value; and it is sufficient to meet the spiritual needs of the Christian Church in all her conflicts and in every period of her progress.

¹ Cf. Heidelberg Catechism, 26, 27, 94. Job xi. 7, 8; Cf. I Cor. ii. 16; John xiii. 7; Rom. xi. 33-36.

² Rom. viii. 28.

§ 183.

Thus far we have been studying Providence chiefly under its positive aspect, or in the relation which the actual processes and ethical movements of the world bear to God's determinative will; an idea however which is to be supplemented by a consideration of Providence under its negative aspect, or in the relation which the on-going of the world bears to Satan and his kingdom; for a *providentia mali* is to be recognized and taken into account as distinguished from the *providentia boni*.

I. Given the contra-ideal condition of the existing cosmos; given the apostasy of the human race active in sympathy with the kingdom of darkness; given divine revelation in the person and kingdom of Jesus Christ, a revelation which by its character and purpose necessitates conflict with Satan's will, the overthrow of Satan's kingdom and the redemption of the subjects of his dominion from the bondage of sin through the death and resurrection of Christ; given the existence and constant action of these antagonistic spiritual forces, and we get an idea of Providence which implies, not only divine agency in the service of truth and goodness, but also the perpetual presence of a contrary spiritual agency in the history of the existing natural and ethical world, an agency hostile to the upholding love and governing wisdom of God in every realm and at all points. The antagonizing powers of Evil seek to thwart the purposes, distort the scheme, and frustrate the teleology of the divine government.

Observation and experience no less than the explicit teaching of Scripture therefore require theology to recognize what may be called two providences, a true and a false spiritual working, immanent in man and in nature; the one,

a working to be called *true*, because in harmony with the intent of creative love, disposing men and things only for the good, and aiming only at order, peace and moral perfection; the other a working to be called *false*, because at enmity with the intent of creative love, disposing men and things for the evil, aiming only at disorder, discord, moral and physical ruin. Two factors are determining and molding current natural and moral phenomena, the divine and the diabolical. There is a course of events directed and sustained by the presence and wisdom of the divine will; there is also a contrary trend of events getting its impulse and animus from the perverse action of the will of sinful personality. In other words, there is *one* course of events which derives its controlling purpose and its leading characteristics from the perpetual action of the divine will, a course of events however which at all points is antagonized and disturbed by the presence and hostile influence of the kingdom of Evil.

2. These two contrary agencies meet in every domain of the general movement of the world, in the immaterial and the material, in the experiences of pagan nations, in the history of divine revelation, and in the progress of the kingdom of grace. Since the apostasy of man no event in the life of any person, or family, or community, or nation derives its character purely and exclusively from the determinative will of God. False spiritual agencies active in nations and families and individuals, active in the material world as well, also conspire either in bringing about the event or in neutralizing its truth, or in marring its beauty, or in qualifying its influence. Everywhere there is an intermingling of the true and the false, of the good and the evil in the epochs of human history, of the ideal and the contra-ideal in the phenomena of nature.

§ 184.

The doctrine of Providence is exposed to two errors, of which the one ignores the *providentia mali*, whilst the other assumes that the kingdom of Satan lies beyond the compass and control of divine government. Both principles are to be duly weighed and related from the Christological standpoint in order to escape false judgment in either direction.

1. The *principal error* since the Reformation to which theology and the Church have been exposed consists in ignoring the relative autonomy of man and fallen angels. False emphasis has been put on the sovereign will of God in relation to sin. Says the Confession of Faith:

"God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass."¹

The expression, *whatsoever comes to pass*, is to be taken in its unrestricted sense, as is evident from the teaching of the Confession on Providence:

"The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in His providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to His own holy ends; yet so, as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin."²

In the same unrestricted sense Calvin uses the word 'all' when, speaking of God's government of particular events, he says: "that they all proceed from His determinate counsel." Again he says:

"We assert, that not only the heaven and the earth, and inanimate creatures, but also the deliberations and volitions of men, are so governed by His providence as to be directed to the end appointed by it."

¹ Ch. iii. 1.² Conf. V. 4.

Success is attributed to "the benediction of God" and "calamity and adversity" to "His malediction." Says Calvin:

"Men can effect nothing but by the secret will of God, and can deliberate on nothing but what He has previously decreed, and determines by His secret direction."¹

2. To the same effect is the representation of Dr. Schweitzer, than whom no theologian of our century has given a more explicit statement of the foreordination of sin. He says:

"The absolute dependence of all human actions upon divine providence means that from all eternity God has by His decree unchangeably fixed each and every event; and He brings it to pass by inevitable necessity."

"The wisdom of God absolutely effects all that comes to pass in the moral world; and in nature He works in order thereto."

"Foreordination has also predetermined the requisite intermediate causalities, as means whereby to bring about the end. Man's freedom is such a *causa secunda*, though far nobler than mere natural things. Properly speaking, secondary causes are the organs of God through which He works. Like all results they are determined and set in motion by Him."

"Divine causality in relation to the origin of sin consists simply in this, that God decreed to withdraw from man the support of His grace so that man, standing on a lower plane, could be active according to his sensuous nature; this withdrawal of His grace being not an unholy act. Though God is not the positive and direct cause of sin, yet of God every species of causality may not be denied. Calvinistic doctrine denies that God is *causa mal'i*, but maintains His causality as indirectly active. It is un-Calvinistic to refer the cause of sin to human freedom, instead of teaching also the divine causality."

"God's holiness is principally active in this that He originates creatively only the good, but in connection with the good He has ordained the evil. Of moral evil He is not the originator, but He ordains evil as the limitation and contrary opposite of the finite good. He ordains evil with the good as its negative factor, just for the purpose of thereby making known His holiness."²

¹ Inst. I. XVI. 4, 8.

[DIESEL N. VII. 1.]

² Die Glaubenslehre der Evangelisch-Reformirten Kirche dargestellt und aus den Quellen belegt von Dr. Alexander Schweitzer, Vol. I. §§ 59 and 60.

Schweitzer even maintains that it was impossible to create the world morally good without ordaining the origin and prevalence of evil. He says:

"If it was not evil to will a grade of existence consisting of a sensuous and spiritual nature, God, in order to reveal Himself as the Holy One, could not originate the finite good without ordaining evil in connection with it."¹

This doctrine of Providence, taught by Calvinistic theologians of the 16th and 17th centuries, ascribes the wickedness of angels and men to God's eternal counsel, not directly to the originative action of the divine will, but to His indirect causation. A distinction is drawn between the moral cause and the efficient cause of sin. The *efficient* cause is the personal creature; sin being predicated of the false action of finite will. But the false action of the finite will is the 'negative factor' of the eternal decree. "All human acts," as Dr. Strong teaches, "whether evil or good, enter into the divine plan and so are objects of God's decrees, although God's active agency is only permissive agency."² The human will is included in 'secondary causes'; and all secondary causes, the human will no less than other factors, are, as Schweitzer expresses it, "the organs of God through which He works; they are active as God wills, not He active as they will;" the evil being ordained in connection with the good as its wholesome limitation. God's 'permissive agency' is not negative, but

¹ Dr. Eduard Böhl expresses the same opinion in relation to the blessedness of the redeemed in heaven. According to His righteous judgment God preserves the reprobate in hell to set in strong relief the unmerited bliss of the elect. "Gott ist ein gerechter und heiliger Gott, und nach seinem gerechten Gericht fordert er die Erhaltung der Verworfenen in der Hölle als nothwendiges Relief und Folie für die unverdiente Seligkeit der Erwählten." *Dogmatik*, p. 139.

² *Systematic Theology*, p. 172.

is taken in an active sense. Dr. Strong explains the divine permission of evil by saying that God "simply decrees to create, and Himself to act in such a way that you will of your own free choice commit sin,"¹—an explanation which, instead of relieving, intensifies God's causative action.

According to this theory God is the *moral* cause of sin, inasmuch as 'men can effect nothing but' what God 'has previously decreed,' and it is His eternal purpose so to act toward man that of his 'own free choice' man will 'commit sin.' It is man, not God, who does the wrong act, but the wrong act God 'has previously decreed,' and as Calvin asserts, He determines it 'by His secret direction.'² God thus becomes the supreme, *all-controlling* cause of moral evil; secondary causes, including man, are only the efficient means through which He works to execute His foreordination of sin as the necessary 'limitation of the finite good.'

3. Can this doctrine be reconciled with the divine life of love and holiness as manifested by the personal history of Jesus Christ? Sound Christology must hold that God abhors all degrees and all forms of wrong-doing; He can

¹ Systematic Theology, p. 172.

² A few passages of the Old Testament seem at first sight to support the divine causation of sin, II Kings xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3, 15; Isa. xlv. 7; Amos iii. 6. But interpreted agreeably to the context and the tenor of the Old Testament "evil" in these passages means the punishment inflicted by God for the sins of His people. On Amos iii. 6, Dr. E. B. Pusey says: "Evil is of two sorts, evil of sin, and evil of punishment. There is no other; for evil of nature, or evil of circumstance, are evils, by God's providence, punishing the evil of sin." Augustine says: "Evil, which is sin, God hath not done; evil, which is punishment for sin, God bringeth." As quoted by Pusey, "I, the Lord, form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil, I am the Lord, that doeth all these things," the main emphasis is on "I," not light and darkness, peace and evil. The prophet Isaiah says: "I will not the ills which ye suffer and will suffer, to any man's cause; for men are wont to do. God in His displeasure sends them upon you."

have no complicity with sin either directly or indirectly. Without controversy God has foreknowledge of all possible events as possible; but we have to distinguish definitely between foreknowledge and foreordination. Dr. Van Oosterzee draws the line of difference with clearness and force:

"Moral evil, just as little willed by God as by irresistible force prevented, was by Him foreseen, permitted, and in various ways limited. Here especially it is of importance not to lose sight of the important distinction between the Foreknowledge and the Decree of God. However closely connected, even in the language of the New Testament, they are yet by no means the same. All that is an object of God's decree is naturally an object also of His foreknowledge; but we cannot on that account say that God has thus unconditionally willed all that He has foreseen. It is easy to speak of this whole distinction as baseless and arbitrary, but one must surely know that he who without any restriction rejects it, makes God the author of sin, yea the sinner, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*. At such a price, we confess, the logical unity of our reasoning in this domain seems to us too dearly bought, since the entire destruction of morality would thus become inevitable."¹

The notion that God 'could not originate the finite good without ordaining evil in connection with it,' and that sin with all its miseries has from eternity been ordained as the 'negative factor' of His providence 'for the purpose of thereby making known His holiness,' if estimated in the light of the absolute revelation of God by the Son of Man, has to be pronounced an obscuration rather than a glorification of divine righteousness, an aspersion rather than a display of manifold wisdom, a limitation of divine power, not a manifestation of its infinitude.

The fundamental principle of so mighty an error is to be found in the major proposition of the decretal system, that God according to His good pleasure has 'unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass' both in the imper-

¹ Christian Dogmatics, by J. J. Van Oosterzee, D.D., Vol. I. p. 342

sonal kingdoms of nature and in the personal kingdom of man, all that is good directly, all that is evil indirectly,—a proposition logically inwoven with a correlative doctrine respecting the creature, which denies the autonomy both of angelic and of human personality. The refusal to predicate relative autonomy of the personal creature, and the assumption that God is the only originaive Will and virtually the only Reality, imperils as well the fact of creation as the truth of personal freedom, and if logically carried out to its last result must lead theological thought to the brink of acosmic pantheism.¹

4. Governed by the Christological conception of God, we are obliged to teach that God is in no sense responsible for moral evil, nor for the unspeakable sufferings entailed by transgression. There is neither any direct authorization of sin, nor does God indirectly bring sin into the world through the instrumentality of the creature by withdrawing from personality that grace, the gift of which the development of normal moral life pre-supposes. It is unwarranted to say, with Schweitzer, that God was not bound to continue to the first man in his primeval state the grace he needed in order to be faithful. The moral order of the world is God's own order; it is His own will; and by the nature and conditions of this order He has freely and unchangeably bound Himself as really as He binds man. If, since man unites a sensuous and a spiritual nature, his original righteousness pre-supposes and requires unceasing communications of grace from God, then God cannot do otherwise than be faithful to those conditions of human righteousness which He has ordained. If it be supposed that He may withdraw needful grace just because He has so decreed it, we set Him in contradiction to Himself; we ascribe to

¹ Cf. § 61, 2.

Him a governmental act that runs directly counter to His immament will, to His will embodied in man's ethical constitution. Obviously the doctrine is defective which holds that God may choose not to stand by the normal conditions of created personality, and yet be righteous.

Nor may we teach God's permissive agency of sin, if the expression be used in a positive sense, meaning that in accordance with His 'decree' and by 'His secret direction,' as Calvin maintains, man violates the divine 'precept,' or that, as Dr. Strong explains 'this permissive decree,' God has determined to act toward man 'in such a way' that he will of his 'own free choice commit sin.'

What is the divine decree but God's ordaining will? And is not His ordaining will embodied in man's moral constitution and moral relations? What is sin but the voluntary transgression of God's decree? or the self-assertion of the personal creature against God? When man commits sin he violates God's ordaining will not only as expressed by His commandments, but also as revealed in the conscience, as immanent in human nature, and immanent in the moral order of the world. On what scriptural grounds then, with what logical consistency, can we assume that God has secretly decreed to act in such a way that of free choice men will transgress His manifested decree? Or have we to predicate of God two contrary wills? a will declared by His 'precepts,' and by the moral order of the world, requiring *righteousness*, and a counter hidden will working to bring about *wickedness*? Do we not in this way array God's ordaining will against God's ordaining will?

Of the divine permission of sin we may with propriety speak only negatively. God does not interpose to render impossible the commission of sin by invading or suspending the relative autonomy of finite personality.

5. Reasoning from these Christian principles we may not ascribe the fall of angels or the fall of man indirectly to God's decree; nor can it be said that God so orders the course of the world that He becomes indirectly responsible for any crime or moral wrong, whether we look upon the wrong as instigated by Satan or committed by men. All wrong-doing is referable exclusively to the causality of self-perverted personal creatures. And whatever be the wrong committed by the personal creature, it is done contrary to the divine purpose, whether the divine purpose be conceived under the form of immanent law, or of commandment, or of eternal decree. Being unchangeably righteous God decrees only the right; being infinitely good He decrees only the good; being absolutely blessed He decrees only the well-being of the creature, whether directly or indirectly. Whatever moral or physical evils afflict our race, or the members of Christ, they are due to the moral and physical disorganization of human life, and this disorganization is the necessary consequence of transgression, the ultimate principle of which is the 'father' of lies.¹ Even the divine judgments which invariably follow transgression are not to be referred to the good pleasure of God, but to the displeasure of righteous love with sin. The moral cause of penalties is the transgression which man has committed and is ever committing.

True, we cannot in all cases draw the line of demarkation between the good and the evil, for many events seemingly good are in reality not good; and many evils are by Providence overruled for good in ways of wisdom which we cannot understand; nor as regards the sorrows and bereavements that befall the Christian can we always discriminate between divine punitive justice and the

¹ John viii. 44.

agency; but this inability to discriminate is no reason for denying the teaching of Scripture and of observation that the contrary agencies of Good and Evil prevail as ruling forces in world-history and in the life of the individual.

6. The commission of sin by man is to be attributed to man, to his fallen nature and his sinful will; and to Satan as the inspiring and governing principle of the whole kingdom of moral evil. It was Booth that assassinated President Lincoln; and the inspiration of the crime came from the 'god of this world.' Even wars, famine and pestilence, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, storms, inundations and conflagrations, are referable in the last instance, not to the sovereign counsel nor to the causative action of God, but referable to the disorganization which the introduction and universal prevalence of evil has caused, and which the author of evil is ever perpetuating by unrelenting antagonism to the divine will. That is to say, divine judgments are the penal consequences of transgression, consequences that follow from antagonism to the divine teleology immanent and unchangeably persistent in Providence. All judgments, all penal sufferings, reveal the eternal, invincible love of God to the good, to the good as the absolute contradictory of moral evil. Judgments also reveal the omnipotent energy of the immanent working of the divine will in the laws of nature and in the sphere of human personality. God has an unchangeable purpose relative to the ultimate glory of Jesus Christ and His kingdom. The inflexible maintenance and progressive movement of this unchangeable purpose in history stands at every point as an immovable rock which the powers of wickedness are ever assailing only to experience the confusion and miseries of repulse. For the wrath of God is

revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness.¹

7. So we have to judge of the afflictions of the righteous. In one respect, their sufferings are the unavoidable consequences of the war ever waged by Satan against Jesus Christ. The members of Christ are hated and assailed by the kingdom of darkness because they are the members of Christ. Paul says of himself: I fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church.² Joined to Christ in the Spirit, possessing the same life, and sharing the same vocation, Paul had fellowship with Christ in the sufferings drawn upon Him by His unflinching faithfulness. This fellowship with Christ in His sufferings all Christ's members share in the degree that they are faithful.

In another respect, the sufferings of Christ's members are partly penal, and partly disciplinary. There is a sense in which believers though righteous in Christ before God are "sold under sin."³ The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; "for these are contrary the one to the other."⁴ Paul says: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."⁵ It follows that the conscience of believers reveals a sense of the judicial displeasure of God, and that displeasure may be manifest in various forms of penal suffering.

But these very sufferings become a discipline under which Christians grow in grace and die to the world. To

¹ Rom. i. 18.² Col. i. 24; Phil. iii. 10.³ Rom. vii. 14.⁴ Gal. v. 17.⁵ Rom. vii. 23.

them that love God all things work together for good, even the painful consequences of sin.¹ But no form of evil which Christians experience is referable immediately to the efficient action of the divine will. As God has not ordained sin, so He is not the author of the pains which His people suffer. He is the author only of those agencies and conditions the design of which is to do away with all pain, whether moral or physical.

Any theory that teaches that God is either directly or indirectly the ordainer of an abnormal order of the world, or the ultimate principle of any act of transgression, contravenes the Christian idea of God's essential nature. Whilst the foreordination of sin as the 'negative factor' of the finite good, holds that God has decreed to act in such a way that man of his own free choice will commit sin; the apostle John, on the contrary, declares: He that doeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.²

§ 185.

The other error is of a directly opposite character; it accords to Satan a false autonomy, to his kingdom a false independence of God.

1. The kingdom of darkness, it is supposed, lies beyond the compass of divine control; evil revels with unrestrained license in the natural and moral world: an error that underlies and pervades all pessimistic systems, and wrongs the might of God's infinite love and wisdom as really as the theory respecting the foreordination of sin.

Though an exalted angel and the 'god of this world,' Satan is God's creature, and subject to His authority. Though personal and autonomic, his autonomy is rela-

¹ Rom. viii. 28.

² I John iii. 8.

tive. Though the head of an antagonistic kingdom and persistently the wilful source of falsehood, he is nevertheless a *servant*, and his wickedness is so disposed by goodness and wisdom that the ultimate purpose of wickedness is frustrated.

God cannot indeed by an arbitrary act of omnipotence annihilate Satan, nor nullify the forces of falsehood, nor abruptly put an end to disorganization, for His world-idea stands, and His immanent will respecting the end of creation and providence is immutable,—nevertheless fallen angels, like fallen men, cannot break away from God's sovereign counsel, nor escape the failure and condemnation which are the inevitable consequences of defying the authority of Love. The teleological movement of the world will not cease to press onward to its goal; though by the abuse of freedom many angels and men may be overwhelmed in moral ruin. God in wisdom restrains wickedness and confounds the wiles of malice; a truth illustrated in the Old Testament, for example, by the history of Joseph, by the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, and by the experiences of Job.

Nay more; God so overrules the apostasy of angels and men, so directs the energies of wickedness, so modifies the influence of misery by methods inscrutable to finite understanding, as to render evil tributary to the final triumph of the kingdom of God; the best illustrations of which we may see in such events as the deadly hostility of Herod to the Babe of Bethlehem, and the sufferings inflicted on Christians by the Roman empire during the first three centuries.

2. The Son of Man by His resurrection and ascension has become, in principle, the destruction of the devil. Says our Lord: I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from

heaven; and the prince of this world hath been judged.¹ This victory of the Son of Man over the kingdom of evil is now the predominant force in the history of the world and of the Church. In principle moral evil is broken. Humanity created anew in the personality of Jesus and in Him superior to and victorious over sin and death, has in His glorification the promise of a certain triumph.

To us the methods of Providence regarding moral and physical evil are now for the most part inscrutable. In wisdom God often interposes in behalf of His people to frustrate the malice of Satan's kingdom. In wisdom God sometimes does not interpose; and the wiles of the devil are for the time not frustrated. But the success of evil is only seeming. To short-sighted men its triumph may appear to be an actual triumph; but in reality it is only an epoch in the history of defeat. Of this truth that God in wisdom and love is working toward the victory and glory of His people by the very losses and wrongs which befall them we have the chief illustration and proof in the crucifixion of our Lord; by the suffering of death He overcame death.² Each of His followers takes part in bearing the cross; and the cross is the key to the spiritual understanding of the painful dispensations of Providence.

3. The results of this inquiry into the nature of divine Providence we may sum up in the following general proposition:

The Christological conception respecting creation and Providence requires us to hold and teach that, though the present actual condition both of men generally and of Christian people is of a mixed character, the wrongs of history being inwrought with right, evil forces warring

¹ Luke x. 18; John xii. 31; xvi. 11.

² Heb. ii. 14.

against good forces, and though the constant reception of blessings is limited by the curse resting upon wickedness; yet the entire upholding and governing activity of God is in principle and purpose good and righteous, and all dispensations of Providence, whether gracious or penal, proceed from the wisdom and justice of Love, support the original teleology of the cosmos, aim only at the blessedness of mankind, and will issue finally in the manifest victory of truth over falsehood, of good over evil, of the Son of Man over Satan, of the kingdom of God over the powers of wickedness.

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